

RECAPTURING THE ABUNDANT LIFE: LEISURE COUNSELING
AS PASTORAL CARE

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A FINAL PROJECT DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE DOCTORAL STUDIES COMMITTEE
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
DAYTON, OHIO
MAY 2006

**United Theological Seminary
Dayton, Ohio**

**Faculty Approval Page
Doctor of Ministry Final Project Dissertation**

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
DEDICATION	vii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	viii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xii
EPIGRAPH	xiii
INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter	
1. MINISTRY FOCUS	5
2. LITERATURE REVIEW RELATED TO WORK, SABBATH, TIME AND LEISURE	22
3. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS RELATED TO THE STUDY	73
4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	171
5. FIELD EXPERIENCE OF MACEDONIA MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH	213
6. DEVELOPING A THEOLOGY AND ETHIC OF WORK AND LEISURE	299
7. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND REFLECTIONS RELATED TO THE STUDY OF WORK, SABBATH, TIME, AND LEISURE WITHIN THE CONTEXT	344
Glossary	
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	367
Appendix	
A. DOCTRINAL DOCUMENTS	370

B. AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENTS	375
C. SURVEY INSTRUMENTS	381
D. STATISTICAL TABLES	401
BIBLIOGRAPHY	405

ABSTRACT

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This action research project was implemented at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio. The study addressed the problem of transforming conservative attitudes about work and leisure within the congregation. Project implementation occurred in two phases, a congregational survey and a bible-based leisure counseling group. Quantitative and qualitative data collected were analyzed using SPSS 13.0. Eight hypotheses were tested, four were affirmed and four rejected. Implementation of the model led to a heightened understanding of beliefs about work and leisure within the congregation and behavioral actions by counselees led to measurable commitments to live more balanced lives.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Completion of this project would not have been possible without God. All thanks be to the Creator of heaven and earth.

Without the love and patience of my family, my wife Robin, and my children Melissa, Morgan, Steven II, Jonathan, Joshua, and Tre' the task of completing this project would have been much more difficult. Thank you for not losing the faith during the turbulent times. Truly, "we are more than conquerors."

Special thanks is given to my Mentor, Anne McWilliams, Ph.D.; my peers Harold Cottom, III, Eugenia Bowser, Anthony King, Zorina Costello-Pruitt, Elizabeth Young, Raul Concha, and Eric Payne. I am truly grateful to my Context Associates, Toney Sanders, Edward Love, Robin Williams, Tamyra Hobson, Ricky Allen, Tennille Love-Leonard, and Ronnie Moreland.; my Professional Associates Jimmy Calloway, Ph.D., Roger L. Coles, Ed.D., and Bonnie L. Thurston, Ph.D.. Without your time, invaluable insights and encouragement the struggle would have been much greater

Thank you Rev. Dr. Robert E. Baines, Jr., my pastor and the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church family for your prayers and participation in this project.

Lastly, I am truly grateful for the nature of this project. It indeed has caused me to be transformed. I have missed so very much in life because I simply failed to declare a Sabbath. Henceforth, I commit to living a Sabbath lifestyle.

DEDICATION

To my parents, the late Leslie Waller, Sr. and Doris J. Waller Mom, thank you for being my first teacher and setting the bar very high for me at an early age. Dad, I learned powerful life lessons from watching you live and die. You both have experienced the finest form of leisure, resting peacefully in the arms of Christ!

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Page
1. Optimal Experience Model	182
2. Four Channel Flow Model	184
3. Stanton-Rich and Iso-Ahola Burnout Model	188
4. Flowchart Model of TLC Leisure Counseling	209

TABLES

Table	Page
1. Model Agenda for the Leisure Counseling Group	211
2. Summary of Reliability of Scales	220
3. Demographic Data	224
4. Mean Scores- Beliefs About the Sabbath	227
5. Frequencies and Percentages Sabbath Beliefs and Practices Scale	228
6. Mean Scores- Beliefs About Time Scale	231
7. Frequencies and Percentages- Beliefs About Time Scale	232
8. Mean Scores- Protestant Work Ethic Scale	235
9. Mean Scores- Theological Beliefs About Work Scale	237
10. Frequencies and Percentages for Theological Beliefs About Work Scale	238
11. Means Table- Leisure Ethic Scale	240
12. Frequencies and Percentages for Leisure Ethic Scale	242
13. Summary of Mean Scores- Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scale	243
14. Frequencies and Percentages for Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scale	244
15. Mean Scores Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scale	250
16. Mean Scores- All Scales	253
17. Frequencies and Percentages- Topics the Church Should Do More Teaching On ..	254
18. Frequencies and Percentages on the Importance of the Church Teaching on Sabbath, Sacred Time, Rest (Physical and Spiritual), Work and Leisure	255

19. One Way ANOVA Sabbath Beliefs and Practice Score by Length of Church Membership	257
20. One Way ANOVA- Beliefs About Time Score by Active in Church Ministry	258
21. One Way ANOVA- Work Ethic Score by Income Category	259
22. One Way ANOVA- Theological Beliefs About Work Score by Occupational Category	259
23. One Way ANOVA- Leisure Ethic Score by Age Category	260
24. One Way ANOVA- Theological Beliefs About Leisure by Age Category	261
25. One Way ANOVA- Religious Beliefs About Leisure by Length of Church Membership	261
26. Matrix of Correlation Coefficients for All Scales	263
27. Regression Equation- Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scale	265
28. Paired Samples T-Test for Pre- and Post Scores Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scales	266
29. Difference in Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure	268
30. Summary of Responses Related to Scriptural Beliefs About Work	270
31. Summary of Responses Related to the Importance of Work to the Faith Journey ..	271
32. Summary of Responses About Employment Status	272
33. Summary of Responses Relating to Barriers to Managing Work in a Biblical Manner	273
34. Summary of Responses Relating to Action Steps Toward Living Abundantly	274
35. Summary of Comments Related to Work	275
36. Summary of Responses Relating to Belief in Scriptures Related to Sabbath	276
37. Summary of Responses Relating to the Importance of Sabbath in the Faith Journey	277
38. Summary of Responses Relating to the Sabbath Observance Faith Journey	278

39. Summary of Responses Relating to the Hindrances to Sabbath-keeping	279
40. Summary of Action Steps Related to Sabbath Observance	280
41. Summary of Comments Related to Sabbath	282
42. Summary of Responses About Time	283
43. Summary of the Importance of the Wise Use of Time on the Faith Journey	284
44. Summary of Response Relating to the Wise Use of Time	285
45. Summary of Hindrances to Managing Time in a Biblical Manner	286
46. Summary of Actions Related to the Management of Time Toward Living the Abundant Life	287
47. Summary of Importance of Leisure as a Part of the Faith Journey	289
48. Summary of Responses Related to Setting Aside Leisure Time	290
49. Summary of Responses Related to Hindrances to Leisure Time	291
50. Responses to Conflicts Related to Leisure Activities	292
51. Actions Toward Living Abundant Living Related to Leisure	293
52. Comments Related to Leisure	294

ABBREVIATIONS

KJV	King James Version
NCV	New Century Version
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version

fides quaerens intellectum – faith seeking understanding

While the right order requires that we should believe the deep things of the Christian faith before we undertake to discuss them by reason, it seems careless of us, once we are established in the faith, not to aim at understanding what we believe.

Anselm of Canterbury
Why God Became Man (Cur deus homo)

INTRODUCTION

As we sojourn through life, sometimes we miss the obvious in our formative years. As the “Great Master Planner,” God deposits in each of us the passions, gifts and tools needed for a divinely chosen ministry. Our call is set for an appointed time and realistically many are startled by the heavenly “tap on the shoulder.”

Forty years ago, as a child, the investigator would have laughed uncontrollably if anyone had implied that in the future, according to God’s will and plan, that he would be teaching people about the blessing in keeping the Sabbath, or expounding on the theological virtues of work and leisure. The thought that God would be glorified and the people of the Kingdom edified through a ministry which is grounded in the simple command to “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Ex 20:8, KJV) had not entered my mind or heart. One of the great transformational discoveries along the journey has been that God is always up to some form of “mischief” in our lives and the key is to watch the God movements.

The convergence of a point of controversy, general observations related to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure within the context, a profound interest in the subject matter on the part of the investigator, were the primary catalysts for the model of ministry addressed by this project. Catalyzing this research effort were two important questions which had a direct bearing on the research design. Each question is supported by scripture and literature from multiple disciplines. The pertinent research questions were:

1. Do individual and congregational beliefs about work, Sabbath, time, and leisure influence attitudes, behaviors, and choices about leisure pursuits?
2. Is there a relationship between bible-based leisure counseling, as an intervention, and the transformation of individual beliefs and behaviors relative to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure?

Subsequent to the development of the research questions, eight hypotheses were tested .

The project was implemented in two phases. In Phase I, a congregational survey was conducted and in Phase II, a bible-based leisure counseling group was implemented.

In Chapter One, the researcher provides a discussion of his spiritual sojourn and the detailed analysis of the context, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio. Additionally, synergies which led to the genesis of the project are discussed.

In Chapter Two, a comprehensive review of literature and relevant research is provided related to the topics of pastoral care and counseling, work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. Authors such as Clinebell, Korn, Purves, Wimberley, provide foundational thoughts about pastoral care and counseling. Contemporary authors such as Bass, Heintzmann, Peiper, Thurston, and Ryken, provide important perspectives about work, Sabbath, time, and leisure.

Chapter Three presents the essential terms, biblical, theological, and historic warrants for the project. The terms work, Sabbath, rest, time, leisure, and pastoral care and counseling are discussed in detail. Additionally, biblical passages such as Gen 2:1-3, Ex 20:8-11, Eccl 3:1-11; 18, Mt 9:35-38; 10:1, Mk 6:30-23, and Jn 10:10 are discussed in the biblical warrants section. God, Jesus, compassion, sin, redemption, and abundant life are discussed as theological warrants in this section.

Chapter Four features a discussion of the research design and methodology for the ministry project. In this section, the investigator provides an overview of Phase I of the project, a congregational survey, and Phase II, a leisure counseling group. The researcher addresses the need for the project, provides the study questions and hypotheses, and a discussion on instrumentation, the sampling plan, pilot testing of instruments for both phases of the project. Additionally, in this section, the researcher addresses efforts undertaken to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of participants in both phases of the project.

In Chapter Five, the investigator provides the narrative related to the field experience. Data from Phase I, the congregational survey, are presented as well as the results of hypotheses testing for the seven hypotheses associated with the first phase. The quantitative data collected from the pre- and post-testing of participants and the sole hypothesis related to the leisure counseling group is presented. Lastly, the qualitative data extracted from responses to questions contained in the Teaching Notes are presented in this section.

The sixth chapter of this document presents a discussion of the need for the development of a theologically based work and leisure ethic among the study congregation and congregations in general. Based on the biblical, theological, and historical trappings of the study, the literature review, and results of the field experience, the model provides a scriptural means for caring and counseling parishioners. More importantly, the model can be used for teaching and instructing congregants on how to liberate themselves from the bondage of work and religious tradition and begin living an

abundant life. The writings of Barnhouse, Moran, Pieper, and Ryken are foundational to this effort.

Chapter Seven provides a series of conclusions and reflections related to this research endeavor. A brief summary of each of the previous six chapters is provided to illustrate the synthesis of effort in this project. This section also provides a proscription for future research and living within and outside of the congregation.

In summary, conducting a congregational survey led to a greater understanding of perceptions related to Sabbath, work, time, leisure and beliefs about select leisure activities based on the source of the belief. Participants in the leisure counseling group became more aware of scriptural, time and personal constraints toward living a more abundant life. Each member of the group developed a series of actions steps which will help to transform thoughts and behaviors, toward living a more abundant life. The synergy of the researcher and the context is the focus of Chapter One, the literature review of Chapter Two, and Theoretical Foundations of Chapter Three. The research design is discussed in Chapter Four, the field experience in Chapter Five, and the discussion of the development of a theologically based work and leisure ethic in Chapter Six. Finally, concluding reflections and comments are presented in Chapter Seven. As previously noted, the following chapter presents the synergy of the researcher, context, and the rationale for the ministry model.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Having discussed the introduction, this chapter discusses the researcher's rationale for developing the ministry project that solicited congregational attitudes and beliefs about work, Sabbath, time, leisure and sources of beliefs about select leisure activities, through the administration of a congregational survey. In addition, the project engaged eight congregants in bible-based leisure counseling which aimed to aid group members in transforming their theology and practice about work, Sabbath, time, and leisure, toward living what Jesus called in John 10:10 "the abundant life."

This ministry model is further influenced by the synergy of the researcher's spiritual autobiography and the contextual analysis. The researcher brings unique perspectives on work, Sabbath, time, and leisure as an academician who has taught the subject matter as a part of Christian education efforts and at the university level. Most important, the researcher as a Believer has struggled all of his adult life with each of the aforementioned topics, from the perspective of understanding related scripture and applying it accurately to his life. He also brings spiritual and ministry gifts to the model of ministry presented in this document.

The context has theologies that urge obedience to the word of God, especially as related to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. The greatest barrier has been understanding what individual and corporate beliefs were and appropriate application of scripture toward liberation from unfounded beliefs. Additionally, the context does not have a

course to address the subject matter, nor is there a ministry to promote a healthy balance between work and leisure, toward living the “abundant life.”

For the benefit of organization, this chapter is segmented into the following sections: researcher’s spiritual autobiography, contextual analysis, and synergy of the researcher and context.

Researcher’s Spiritual Autobiography

After highlighting the rationale and some of the driving forces behind the project, the researcher’s spiritual autobiography is presented in this section. Here the reader will discover the researcher’s experiences and ministry gifts that and catalyze his passion for exploration of the topics of work, Sabbath, time, leisure, and bible-based leisure counseling.

The researcher was born into a family of eight children (five boys and three girls), second in birth order and the eldest son. He spent all of his formative years in Flint, Michigan. His mother was from Kansas and father from the “bible belt” of Virginia. His mother was raised United Methodist and his father Baptist.

His paternal grandfather, the late Hezkiah Waller, was an accomplished musician and officer within the local church. The researcher’s paternal grandmother (Berkeley Waller) has always been one of the “mothers” of the church and from the time of his earliest recollection was always one who prayed diligently and read her bible multiple times per day.

The researcher’s maternal grandparents, the late Ruth and Wilbur Neely were devout Methodists. Both were avid Bible readers, and believed fervently in the power of

prayer. It was in the home of the researcher's maternal grandparents, where obedience to the Sabbath commandment was practiced with faithfulness. Sunday was proclaimed as a day of rest for worship and enjoyment of the gift of family.

At age twelve, the researcher joined Bethel United Methodist Church. At seventeen, he was permitted by his parents to choose the church he wanted to attend and he began attending First Trinity Missionary Baptist Church in Flint, Michigan. It was a very stable, conservative, Black Baptist Church that had a young vibrant Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Frank O. Hockenhull. I found him to be very personable, caring and concerned about the plight of young people and extremely committed to ministry. In the same year, the researcher became a member and was baptized by immersion. He was active in the Youth Ministry and Sunday School programs until I left for college in the fall of 1973. He would remain a faithful member there for more than 25 years.

One of the tragic patterns of the researcher's adult life has been a destructive pattern of excessive busyness. He knew from reading the Bible that there was much more to life than being in constant motion. Sabbath-keeping, taking care of our bodies as the temple of God, enjoying quiet still moments away from the rigor of life, and even making time to play, are all part of abundant living. One of the great ironies in the researcher's life, was the fact that he spent nine years of his career as a university professor at Central Michigan University, teaching in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies. One of the courses he taught was the Philosophy of Recreation and Leisure. The course examined the socio-psycho-cultural aspects of leisure in contemporary society. He even designed the course to examine the religious-spiritual aspects of leisure in Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions. Despite his professional training, teaching and research

in the area of leisure studies, he could not find his way out of the “work trap.” What was even more appalling to the investigator were the number of his friends and congregants (past and present) that had fallen victim to the same type of busy lifestyle. He had taught, conducted research, and made professional presentations on work, Sabbath, time, and leisure, but yet had not lived it.

The researcher encountered Revered Dr. Andrew Purves and Reverend Dr. Bonnie Bowman Thurston while attending Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Dr. Purves was an accomplished pastoral theologian and advocated a style of pastoral care and counseling that focused on “caring for the souls” of congregants. Dr. Thurston, an accomplished New Testament scholar, had a profound interest in Sabbath keeping, restorative leisure and the sacred use of time. These were no chance encounters in light of the researcher's difficulties with being overly busy, feeling entrapped by work, the personal longing of the soul for a balanced life.

Lessons Learned Along the Journey

Certainly, the researcher's journey has not been without struggle and suffering. Truthfully, the researcher is grateful to the Creator for each struggle that he has endured. There were a multitude of lessons learned along the way that have shaped and molded him into what the Creator would have him to become. Along his spiritual journey, several life changing revelations have occurred, namely the following:

The Creator does love and care for all people;

1. Through all of our suffering the Creator is ever present, and we must learn to find the Creator amidst the pain;

2. Pastoral ministry is much more than Word and Sacrament, it also involves the mammoth task of caring for the souls of people;
3. For an effective caregiving/counseling ministry, there must be an integration of pastoral theology into praxis;
4. People struggle daily with their concept of the Creator and are looking for spiritual guidance and healing as a step toward transforming their lives.
5. The Creator has blessed me with the gifts of teaching, preaching, compassion, counseling and care-giving to help heal the spiritual wounds of those who are suffering;
6. Prayerfully following the guidance of the Holy Spirit in making decisions about career, family, and ministry;
7. Enjoying life and not succumbing to busyness is important to the abundant life that Christ has provided for us.

Context Analysis

Having discussed the researcher's spiritual autobiography, attention is now shifted to the contextual analysis. In this section the reader discovers the theological urging of, practical needs for, receptiveness to the ministry project. This section is organized by means of subsections which include a theological analysis, ecological analysis and resources analysis.

Theological Analysis

Under the heading of theological analysis, explicit and implicit theologies are discussed. The term explicit theology refers to the official doctrinal positions of the context.¹ The Church Covenant, Baptist Articles of Faith, and the Busy Pastor's Guide serve as the primary source material. Implicit theology is defined as the genuine but fragmented theologies members of the context believe.²

Explicit Theology

The discussion of the explicit theology espoused within the context begins with the Church Covenant. The Covenant is the source document by which the community of faith expresses its commitment to the scripturally based, high ideal that allows members to successfully live in community together. There are two excerpts within the document that relate to the nature of this study. First, in paragraph two, the statement, "... We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge and holiness"³ is found. This statement infers that there is a duty and responsibility to study and understand the Bible, toward living holy lives. Inherent in this statement is the need for clarity relative to the biblical concepts of work, Sabbath, time and leisure.

¹ Nancy T. Ammerman, Jackson W. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney, eds., *Studying Congregations* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998) 23-39, 40-44, 132-166.

² Ibid., 31.

³ L.G. Jordan, *The Baptist Standard Church Directory and Busy Pastor's Guide* (Nashville: Sunday School Publishing Board/National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., 1997), 30.

There is also a statement in the fourth paragraph of the Church Covenant which states, “We further engage to watch over, to pray for, to exhort and stir up each other unto every good word and work; ... to participate in each other's joys, and with tender sympathy bear one another's burdens and sorrows ...”⁴ The aforementioned statement admonishes readers to actively engage in verbal communications and actions that are pleasing to God. This includes affirming words and actions related to work and leisure. The article further mandates the reader to be joyful with others during work and leisure.

In summary, the Church Covenant serves as a primary source of doctrine within the context. The two excerpts cited in the previous paragraphs are important toward gaining an understanding of the role of work, Sabbath, time, and leisure in the life of the Believer. Additionally, the statement in paragraph four validates for the reader the fact that it is God’s desire for each of us to experience joy within work and leisure. This statement is a precursor to living life abundantly.

The second source document used to convey implicit theology is the twenty-four *Articles of Faith*. Black Baptist have grown accustomed to espousing the faith through the *Articles* on a regular basis. As a member church of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. the Articles of Faith are taught regularly. Article Fifteen, entitled *Of the Christian Sabbath* addresses the importance of the Christian Sabbath in the lives of practicing Baptists. The aforementioned article states the following:

⁴ Ibid.

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath; and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for the rest that remaineth for the people of God.⁵

Despite the theological import of this particular article and its importance in the daily living of congregants, it remains a source of tension. The statement “abstain from secular labor” in the article lies in tension with the work lives of many congregants. Some have “non-traditional” work schedules and cannot observe the Sunday as a Sabbath Day as recommended. Secondly, serious questions surface when an attempt to define what the term “sinful recreations” constitutes. A major concern is, “does one sin against God due to non-observance of the Christian Sabbath due to being a faithful steward of the job that God has blessed one with? Does a dinner and “R” rated movie on Sunday comprise “sinful recreation?” It is highly probable that interpretation of this Article and associated doctrine related to observance of Sabbath could impede the development of healthy attitudes relative to Christian leisure. Here is an instance in which congregants can be easily bound and held captive by denominational tradition.

Article Twenty of the Articles of Faith captures the idea of Christian stewardship. This article entitled *Of Stewardship* states the following:

⁵ Ibid., 43.

We believe that God is the source of all blessings, temporal, and Spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. We have a binding stewardship in our possessions. We are therefore under obligation to serve Him with our time, talents and material possessions: and should recognize all these as entrusted to us to use to the glory of God and helping others. Christians should cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately and liberally contribute of their means to advancing the redeemer's cause on earth.⁶

Typically, the primary focus of this article is on financially supporting the work of the Church through the giving of tithes and offerings. Further examination of the article compels the reader to consider stewardship as a much broader challenge. Within the context of the Article and this study, stewardship includes the God-given gifts of work, leisure, and the time allotted to engage in both.

Within the context, caring for the souls of congregants is taken very seriously. One of the guiding documents of the church is the *Busy Pastor's Guide*, which addresses the issue of caring for congregants. In the section related to duties of the pastor, it is stated that: "it is his/her duty to watch over the personal experience and life of the members, to exhort, admonish, reprove, rebuke, as one who is entrusted with the care of the souls who expects to give account of his stewardship."⁷ Additionally, the *Busy Pastor's Guide* addresses the issue of pastoral visitation, which encompasses counseling. The following paragraph extracted from the section on pastoral visits states the following:

⁶ Ibid., 47.

⁷ Ibid., 20.

In order to establish and preserve the spirit of unity and concord that is so essential among “workers together with God” the pastor should find time for calls, not only among those sick and in distress in his church, but on his brethren in ministry. To manifest interest and a spirit of cooperation in and with his members and fellow ministers yields fruit a thousandfold.⁸

The current pastor Reverend Dr. Robert E. Baines, Jr. ardently believes in supporting individuals and families through times of testing and trials. The researcher also shares this position. The prevailing philosophy is that the pastor and ordained clergy will generally see anyone that has a concern and desires counseling. There is contact via visitation and telephone follow-up within anyone who is reported as sick or is in crisis. As leaders within the church, officers, namely Deacons and trained laity are equipped to support those that are physically sick or are in distress (Acts 6:1-6). In the case of counseling, generally, three counseling sessions are scheduled and if there is a need beyond the third session, then additional counseling by the pastor or clergy may be scheduled or an appropriate referral is made for clinical assistance. One means by which congregants can access care-giving and counseling services is to raise concerns through participation in one of thirty ministries offered at Macedonia. Each ministry provides an opportunity for pastoral care by direct request or from referral by the ministry leader.

In summary, the *Church Covenant*, *Articles of Faith*, and the *Busy Pastor's Guide* each contain information that permits the congregation to espouse its explicit theology in the course of living in community with one another. Each document contains elements that are important to the study of work, Sabbath, time and leisure as biblical concepts. Proper understanding and application of both scripture and doctrine can lead to a balanced life of work and leisure. Having discussed the explicit theology within the

⁸ Ibid.

context, attention is now given to providing a brief discussion on the implicit theology of the context.

Implicit Theology

In discussing the implicit theology of the congregation, the researcher addresses this area as a participant-observer. Having participated in multiple discussions with the Pastor, officers and members about the topics of work, Sabbath, time, and leisure there are a diversity of viewpoints.

The first observation is that implicit theology suggests that work is an important gift given by God. From sermons, discussions on family, and in Sunday school lessons, the importance and stewardship of work is highly emphasized. An important part of the discussions are admonishments against work becoming an “idol.”

Secondly, very little attention is given to the topic of Sabbath. As one congregant noted, “it is one of those commandments that you know is there, but you look past.” The researcher has preached twice on Sabbath during the period of implementation of this study. The ideas of Sabbath-keeping and Sabbath lifestyles were totally foreign to the hearers.

A third important observation is that there is a clear understanding of time, its value, time in its linear sense, and stewardship of time. Because of the “busy” nature of the congregation, the general sentiment is a longing for more time. An important implicit theology relative to time is that we are required to be wise stewards of time.

Finally, relative to leisure, there has been an evolution of thought over the course of several years. It is generally accepted that there are forms of leisure which are openly

accepted and others which are not. What has resulted is a schism surrounding acceptable types of leisure activities. The implicit theology of leisure within the context suggests that God approves of the church picnic and playing table games during fellowship functions, but on the other hand God disapproves of activities such as dancing, playing cards, watching “R” rated movies, attending professional sports events on Sunday, and the consumption of alcoholic beverages. What illustrates this matter even more is the tension that occurs annually over “line dancing” at the annual church Christmas social. The tension became so great, that a Pastoral Memorandum on dancing was published prior to the 2003 Christmas social. The memo is located in Appendix A. The tone of the memo is such that the biblical basis for fun and dancing were defined as well as an explanation of what “Christian liberty” requires. Having fruitful discussions about leisure has been slow and tension filled.

Additionally, to validate the implicit theology within the context, short conversations were held with four congregants regarding work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. To begin, a sixty year old, African American male, noted, “God wants us to have fun. Life was not meant to be boring. I really can’t talk to people about stuff I like to do, because you know how they are. I like to go over to Indiana to the boat (gambling) and have a little fun. You know we can’t talk about that in here.”

A forty-eight year old, African American male provided a comparable response when asked how work, Sabbath, time and leisure were operationalized in his life. The respondent noted, “I work too much and I know it. I am trying to find a way to make my life more balanced. My wife and I are working hard on doing more together. On what you

said about the Sabbath, I know I don't even try to do that one. My life is too busy, but I am working on that one."

A thirty year old African American female, who is also a single parent, responded in the following manner when asked how the four biblical concepts manifested in her life. The respondent stated, "Between work, taking care of my children, and trying get to worship and serve in the church, there is really not time for much else. The kids require a lot of my time and there is not a whole lot left for me. I have to work on Sunday and I know Sunday is considered our Sabbath Day, and so I can't say I observe a Sabbath. Fun is really important and I do believe God does not want us to live boring lives with no fun. I am working on that one."

Finally, a forty eight year old, African American female, provided a significant comment when asked about the importance of work, Sabbath, time, and leisure in her life and in the life of the congregation. The respondent stated, "I believe we are getting better. People are learning to have more fun with the church. I think we do more than just the church picnic to promote fun. There are still a number of people who have hang-ups about what church folks should do for fun. You see how much sand they raised about dancing at the Christmas Fellowship last year. But we are growing. As far as time is concerned I try not to do much on Sunday because it is the Sabbath Day, but I am also working on managing my time better. I am looking forward to slowing down quite a bit as I get close to retirement."

Based on the four conversations held with congregants, the implied theology within the context suggests the following: (1) God wants people to have fun and enjoy life, (2) there is a sense of busyness in everyone's life, (3) Sabbath is more of an after-

thought, and (4) there are some forms of leisure that are not positively sanctioned by the congregation.

In summary, the implicit theology of the context encourages work, does not address Sabbath, encourages the wise use of time, and suggests that leisure is valuable, but only select activities are pleasing to God. After completing an explanation of the explicit and implicit theologies within the context, the following paragraphs provide a discussion on the resource analysis within the context.

Resource Analysis

Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Dayton, OH, is located on the west side of the city, in a geographic area that some would classify as depressed. In this area, there is a proliferation of black churches. As is the case with many congregations across America, the vast majority of congregants do not reside in the neighborhood where the church is located. The overwhelming majority reside in other sectors of the city or in the suburbs (Trotwood, Centerville, or Huber Heights).

Macedonia is a conservative, predominately African American Baptist church affiliated with the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. The church is seventy-five years old and there is a tremendous amount of loyalty to the church. The current pastor is Reverend Dr. Robert E. Baines, Jr. The worship style is evolving into one that is very high-spirited and “free flowing.” Currently, we have approximately four hundred sixty members on the books, with approximately three hundred fifty participating in one of two services on Sunday morning. Of those that attend regularly, Macedonia has one hundred twenty “disciples”, those that study (attend one of three Bible studies regularly), serve

(are involved in at least one of thirty ministries), and give (standing with those that are committed to tithing and doing so regularly). Many of the congregants are second or third generation members. The congregation is an “aging” congregation in light of the fact that better than fifty-percent of members are fifty-five and older. There is an influx of congregants that are between the ages of thirty-five and fifty. Finally, there are members between the ages of eighteen and thirty-four who have young families and are often in transition.

Macedonia takes great pride in being a church with “active” ministries that address the needs of the community and families. The church is labeled as a “busy” church. One of the drawbacks of having “busy disciples” is that often they faint from the strain of managing the responsibilities of work, family, personal discipleship and service to the church. An interesting phenomenon that continuously occurs in the life of the congregation is that the same individuals serve as ministry leaders almost perpetually. Macedonia is starting to see a growth in the number of persons ages twenty-one to forty-five that are becoming actively involved in service to the church. One common complaint is that “servants become tired from bearing the dual load.” The vast majority of members are actively engaged in the secular workforce, with approximately one hundred twenty actively serving in ministries. In the 2004 Congregational Survey the following relevant highlights help to form a “snapshot” of the aforementioned phenomenon in the congregation:

1. Strengths:

- a. Teaching, preaching and organization
- b. Variety of ministries
- c. Strong family orientation

2. Weaknesses

- a. Lack of discipleship- lack of evangelism, participation and complacency.
- b. Cabinet/Ministry Leadership- lack of proper reporting, participation.

The previously noted strengths and weaknesses led to the following objectives in 2005:

1. Continue to include middle-aged women in the advisory and leadership structure, while working on more male leadership.
2. Continue to urge individual discipleship, urge relationship building, and provide responsive teaching.
3. Continue to feed and lead the church in a way that features a variety of ministries and a family like atmosphere.
4. Continue to work on disciple making, worship, the Cabinet, and evangelism.⁹

One of the concerns that is consistently verbalized is the lack of opportunity to engage in leisure within and outside of the congregation. Additionally, ministry leaders quietly verbalize their sense of fatigue which some suggest stems from a lack of balance in their lives. It is under the auspices of Bible based leisure counseling that the potential solution lies. It is clear that attitudes and beliefs related to work, rest, Sabbath and leisure are at the core of the issue. Despite the cries for rest, restorative activities and leisure,

⁹ Robert E. Baines, Jr. *2004 Summary of Congregational Survey and Intentions* (Dayton: Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, 2004), 1.

acknowledging the appropriateness and sanctity of leisure within the context remains difficult.

Having completed the spiritual autobiography of the researcher, a holistic explanation of the context, the researcher now provides a brief discussion on the synergy of the researchers' gifts and talents and needs of the context.

Synergy of the Researcher and the Context

Several related synergies served to catalyze the formation of this ministry project. The problems of personal and congregational busyness and the lack of leisure served as the foundation for the project. The concern of the researcher about Sabbath-keeping (Ex 20:8-10), the preoccupation with busyness, in adherence to the God-given mandate to rest (Gen 2:3), the list of church related traditions that manifest themselves in a never ending prescription of "do's and don'ts" which hinder our quest for abundant life (Jn 10:10). The researcher's growing concern over the health and spiritual implications of living life "in the fast lane" also helped to drive the development of this ministry project. There is a destructive nature in this pattern of life, and the investigator has witnessed congregants experiencing marital, health, and spiritual challenges as a result of a "time crunch" in their lives. The aforementioned concerns, coupled with the researchers' gifts of teaching, research, care-giving and counseling, provide the intersections for ministry.

Having completed the explanation of the researcher's spiritual autobiography, and explanations of the context and synergies surrounding the project, the research advances to the next chapter which is the Review of Literature.

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE RELATED TO WORK, SABBATH, TIME, LEISURE AND THE MINISTRY PROJECT

Having discussed the rationale for choosing this area of ministry, this chapter discusses a representative body of literature related to pastoral care, work, Sabbath, time, leisure, and leisure counseling as related to this project. The review of the literature is the driving force behind the development of the study questions and hypotheses pertinent to this research endeavor. The review of literature is organized into the following topical areas: pastoral care, work, Sabbath, time, leisure, leisure counseling, and other related literature.

Pastoral Care

One of the primary tenets of pastoral care and counseling is self care. Before one can be an effective caregiver, one must be responsible for caring for one's self—mind, body, and spirit self-care is critically essential to those that are called to be care-givers and counselors of others.¹

It is contradictory to the theoretical, biblical and theological foundations of pastoral care and counseling to allow one's own body, soul and spirit to falter while caring for others. Learning to exercise good stewardship between the work and leisure is a vital part of self-care. It is the first step in helping others to do so.

¹ Class notes from August 2004 Peer Group Session, Dr. Eugene Robinson, Pastoral Care and Counseling Mentor, United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH.

Shakti Gawain in her book *The Four Levels of Healing: A Guide to Balancing the Spiritual, Mental, Emotional, and Physical Aspects of Life* suggests that humans are living spiritually and emotionally empty lives that are dangerously unbalanced. Only by balancing the four aspects: spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical, can people be successful and fulfilled.² What is important about this text is that it provides the tools for both caregiver and client. Holistic care is essential for maintaining balance in life.

Howard Clinebell in *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing & Growth*, brings forth another important charge of pastoral care and counseling, that being “to empower growth toward wholeness in all of the six interdependent aspects of a person’s life.”³ The areas of interdependence include:

1. Enlivening one’s mind
2. Revitalizing one’s body
3. Renewing and enriching one’s intimate relationships
4. Deepening one’s relationship with nature and the biosphere
5. Growth in relation to the significant institutions in one’s life; and
6. Deepening and vitalizing one’s relationship with God.⁴

The tasks listed above by Clinebell are of paramount importance to pastoral care and counseling.

A major part of pastoral care and counseling is helping those we serve to cope with change. In all things change is inevitable. Margaret Kornfeld in *Cultivating*

² Shakti Gawain, *The Four Levels of Healing: A Guide to Balancing the Spiritual, Mental, Emotional, and Physical Aspects of Life* (New York: New World Library, 1999), 5.

³ Howard Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing & Growth* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1984), 31.

⁴ Ibid.

Wholeness: A Guide to Care and Counseling in Faith Communities imparts the staunch reality that “this is a day of change.”⁵ Change is all around us, some welcome and embrace it while others struggle against it and reject it. In many instances, change is transformational and can be the necessary tool toward moving people to the position that God would have them to be in. Kornfeld further elucidates in *Cultivating Wholeness* that “today we have an opportunity to become more available to deep religious experience because of a significant change that is happening in our culture. A reflection of this change, but not in itself the cause, is the growing number of people who are becoming conscious of the soul and emerging community.”⁶ A diverse range of people are drawn to their inner lives and are finding God there. Some speak of this as inner work, or soul work; others speak of being on a spiritual journey. The task of the pastoral counselor/caregiver is to provide the biblical and experiential “wise counsel” that will aid in traversing sometimes “stony paths” along the journey.

Kornfeld also surmises that transformational change requires a new way of seeing. We all must learn to see the delicate but important connection between the mind, body, and soul. The growing acceptance of the unity of body-mind-soul represents a profound deviation from antiquated modes of thinking. In essence a “paradigmatic shift” is required—a transformation of an entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on as shared by members of a community.”⁷ The teachings of Jesus drive transformation and the required paradigm shift to move everyone toward wholeness. The

⁵ Margaret Kornfeld, *Cultivating Wholeness: A Guided to Care and Counseling in Faith Communities* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 3.

⁶ Ibid., 4.

⁷ Ibid., 7.

truth of the inner connectedness of body-mind-soul has been integrated into our culture, unsettling it, freeing it and healing it. New wine is being placed in new skins.

This unity of body-mind-soul is not new. The ancient Hebrews understood it clearly. Students of the Hebrew Bible have learned about the Hebrew concept of the corporate personality: the properties of mind and soul are encoded in the Hebrew names of body parts. So *ruah*, “breath,” also meant spirit—including the Spirit of Yahweh. And *leb*, “heart,” also meant understanding. In essence, one thought with one’s heart.⁸

As previously noted, Jesus spoke about the need to put new wine in new skins in response to the criticism lodged against him when he dined with publicans and sinners. Jesus responded that he came to be a physician to the sick, not to the well or righteous (Mk 2:15-22). Jesus was creating a new community and leading them toward wholeness. Whole, healthy individuals and communities can nurture us, change us and transform us. Because religious communities and their members function within a natural transition of life, they can use their experiences for healing past wounds as well as supporting growth. Communities can also be the holding ground where they help their members discover their own solutions to problems and conflict. Wholeness also includes healthy, biblical sound understandings of work, rest, Sabbath, time, and leisure which are integral parts of the life of believers and their communities.

Finally, in order to be an effective caregiver, Andrew Purves mandates that there must be a strong pastoral theology at the core of pastoral care and counseling efforts. Purves in *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition* summarizes seven key points

⁸ Ibid., 10.

which under gird a doctrinally sound pastoral theology and understanding of pastoral care. Purves leaves the reader with the following points to consider:

1. *Pastoral theology and pastoral care are explicitly confessional in context.* In a core or foundational way, pastoral work is not based on anything other than Jesus Christ clothed with the gospel given as and under the marks of word and Sacraments.
2. *Pastoral theology is a discipline, and pastoral care is a practice, deeply rooted at all points in the study of the Bible.* In the Bible is the foundation and scripture is the final authority which guide the work of the office.
3. *Ministry is a high calling to a holy office, the faithful exercise of which is necessary for the salvation of Christ's people.* The faithful discharge of pastoral work is a godly charge given to the few called by God's providence to that office, whose work is necessary for the life and ministry of the church.
4. *Pastoral work demands taking heed to oneself to the end that he or she is theologically, spiritually, and ethically a mature person.* Those engaged in pastoral work must first take care of themselves toward then end of growing through faithful study, spiritual practices and being capable of making morally sound judgments.
5. *God will hold pastors accountable for the exercise of the pastoral office and the care of God's people.* Pastoral accountability surely is one of the great surprises found in the classical texts. Clearly all who seek the office need to be made explicitly aware of the dangers to themselves should they accept the call inadvertently or enter into the practice of ministry carelessly.
6. *Pastoral care is the art of arts.* Pastoral care is an aesthetic discipline, one that requires a certain cast of mind, an intuitive apprehension that is deeply guided by the things of God and an understanding of the nature of people.

7. *Pastoral ministry is contextualized and situational.* The classical writers including Gregory Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, Gregory the Great, Martin Bucer, and Richard Baxter argue at length on the complexities of pastoral work. Person and circumstance must shape the pastoral response.⁹

Work

Much has been written about the status of work in America. Despite the current unemployment rate which hovers around seven percent, work is a pivotal issue within American society. For example, John deGraaf in his book *Take Back Your Time: Fighting Overwork and Time Poverty In America* suggests that many American operate in a state of “forced overtime.” It is perfectly legal for employers to require employees to work beyond a normal 40 hour workweek. Many employees willingly comply out of their financial aspirations toward increased buying power of out necessity due to inequities in our system of compensation. For whatever the reason, deGraff contends that Americans are perpetually wedded to the idea of being overworked. deGraff defines overwork as,

occurring when longer hours over day, week, or year begin to have a deleterious effects on the individual, family, community, and economy. The line between work and overwork is crossed when fatigue and stress build up, often cumulatively, leading to a greater risk of mistakes, accidents, injuries, health problems, reduced quality of workmanship, and diminished productivity per hour worked.¹⁰

The author further cites overemployment as an equally pervasive problem.

Overemployment refers to a situation in where workers are willing but unable at their

⁹ Andrew Purves, *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 115-120.

¹⁰ John de Graaf, *Take Back Your Time: Fighting Overwork and Time Poverty in America* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2003), 30.

current jobs to reduce the amount of time they devote to earning an income. People who remain overemployed tolerate longer hours because they either expect their overemployment to be brief or anticipate that part-time or reduced hours status involves too large a sacrifice in terms of benefit coverage of job status. De Graff estimates that almost one-third of the U.S. workforce regularly work more than the standard 40-hour workweek. In fact, nearly one in five workers now spend more than 50 hours per week at work.¹¹

Author Ralph Keyes further explores the problem of the lack of balance between work and leisure in contemporary society. Keyes in his book *Timelock: How Life Got So Hectic and What You Can Do About It*, indicates that employed Americans are now working longer than their contemporaries. Much of this phenomenon, notes Keyes, can be attributed to the fact that work is no longer associated with a task, but is governed by the clock.¹² The manner in which we get accomplish work is no longer governed by our “inner clock,” but by the “outerclock,” thus forcing workers into a clock-driven frenzy to get tasks done.¹³

In an e-mail received by the researcher several months ago, writer William J. Hunter, succinctly summarized the aim of many Americans who are revisiting the state of work and its meaning in their lives. Hunter states the following in his brief essay entitled *Making a Living and Making a Life*:

¹¹ Ibid., 30-31.

¹² Ralph Keyes, *Timelock: How Life Got So Hectic and What You Can Do About It* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), 173.

¹³ Ibid.

Most of us at some point must make a fateful choice, should we devote our time and talent to making a living or to getting a life? For years, many people are running at the head of the rat pack. Every step of the way, people are busy building careers on a succession of triumphs and many are earning multiple degrees along the way. The trouble with the rat race that most find themselves in, is that even if you win, you're still a rat and the sad reality when you leave your core values behind, despite all the material comfort many successful people are miserable.

As the New Year approaches, if there is a promise at the heart of the new economy, it is this, we should all do work that matters. Today, too many of us are putting in too many hours, and accumulating too much stress, to work at something that isn't personally engaging and rewarding. That said, far too many of us are willing to accept the notion that it is impossible to make a living and make a life. As a result, we still trudge off to work in the morning, tacitly accepting that we're stuck with whatever life deals us or, alternatively, that while our work may be unsatisfying, at least it provides the material definition of success. As a result, we feel that we're forced into making a fateful, either-or decision: Either make a living or make a life.

We need to take on an audacious challenge, to replace the "either-or" with a "both-and." Our mission, if we decide to accept it is to demonstrate that we can make both a living and a life, to do work that mattered.

Dream, not just dream but dream big dreams. Be your self, be your best self and make a difference in yourself and the world.¹⁴

In summary, Hunter proposes that with the dawn of each new year, we have a moral duty to ponder the gift of work. Everyone has the responsibility to evaluate what is being done as vocation or avocation and find the God-given joy in work. The author charges the reader with the task of guarding against undue stress and overwork, which stem from making work an "idol" unto itself. Lastly, Hunter offers the important point that each of us must use the gifts and talents that God in us to be our very best. When we

¹⁴ William J. Hunter, "*Making a Living and Making a Life.*" Personal E-mail. Accessed 16, December, 2004.

are at our best, our labors are pleasing to God and we are empowered to make a difference in the world (Mt. 5:13-16).

Mary Holder Naegeli in *A Passion for the Gospel: Confessing Jesus Christ for the 21st Century* suggests that we have disconnected our faith from work and thus work has become “compartmentalized.”¹⁵ Naegeli infers that as a result of the compartmentalization of work and faith Christians are faced with adopting a dualistic set of values for their lives at and outside of work, devaluing work, or latching on tightly to the secular trappings of work, as ways to reconcile the conflict. Naegeli insists that compartmentalizing work and faith is emotionally and spiritually exhausting and generally very unproductive.¹⁶

Work and the African American Experience

Work was and remains a linchpin in the African American experience. It is a critical determinant in African American society, culture, and the religious experience. From the time that native Africans were stolen from their homes and forced into servitude, work has been in forefront of the experience. It is out of the back-braking work experience during slavery and the struggle for opportunity to gain work in post-slavery period that the both the work ethic and spiritual experience of African Americans was borne. It is a dualistic incongruity that one’s personal value, self-esteem and position within the community of faith are correlated to ones employment status. The implications

¹⁵ Mary Holder Naegeli, “One Life to Live” in *A Passion for the Gospel* ed. Mark Achtemeier and Andrew Purves (Louisville: Geneva, 2000), 164-166.

¹⁶ Ibid., 166-167.

of work and how contemporary African American Christians perceive work has far reaching social, psycho-emotional, health, familial, spiritual implications.

The apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 3:10 wrote: “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.” Frequently, this passage is cited as an admonition against slothfulness and unemployment. The penalty is understood in the African American experience that if one does not have employment as a result of slothfulness, then one should not be supported financially by the community. Despite the fact that employment is an extremely complex phenomenon in the African American tradition, theologically speaking, to be unemployed without “good cause” is counted as sin.

Work has an “*elevated*” position in the lives of many African Americans because of its social, psychological, cultural, and moral imports. It is not uncommon for some African Americans to find themselves in a position of overworking due to the prime value of being employed. Carroll A. Watkins-Ali in her book *Survival & Liberation: Pastoral Theology in African American Context*. Watkins-Ali notes that the widening gap in employment for African Americans is indicative of a bleak economic outlook for blacks. Entering and sustaining employment in the workforce becomes a high priority.¹⁷

Work, if not placed in its proper perspective, can become an idol or “god.”

Jeanne E. Sherrow in *It's About Time: A Look at Leisure Lifestyle & Christianity* addresses the issue of work as an “idol.” Sherrow notes that “success at all costs has become our call to worship. Our call to worship is at the shrine of success and

¹⁷ Carroll A. Watkins-Ali, *Survival & Liberation: Pastoral Theology in African American Context*. (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1999), 25-30.

achievement.”¹⁸ Sherrow’s position is akin to Carol Watkins-Ali’s caution about over-valuing work, particularly among African Americans. Sherrow proceeds to state the following:

The idol of success and achievement is high and lifted up and greatly revered in the technological society in which we find ourselves. Loud are the anthems of worship: new ideas, bigger plans, greater productivity, marked efficiency, better promotion, increased sales! And the reward for such adulation? Advancement and promotion, longer hours, more responsibility, higher salaries, less time with one’s loved ones (but the ability to buy more for them), greater prestige. What an idol! Not only do we sing its praises and bask in our ensuing rewards, but our allegiance to our country and even our devotion to God seem almost measured by our worship of this idol.¹⁹

Ultimately what evolves is an unhealthy, biblically unsound belief about work and its place in the life of a believer. What may manifest is what Sherrow calls “workaholism.” The term is used to define a state of an individual who has a dependence on overwork, a dependence which has a notable disturbance on the rest of his/her life.”²⁰ The term “workaholism” is not technically recognized as a psychological disorder. However, it is commonly understood as a psychological issue. Someone is struggling with workaholism when s/he has a focused relationship with work that excludes time for self-nurturing, friends and love relationships. Workaholism becomes a relationship with work that competes with other important relationships. The by-products of this condition include preoccupation with nothing but work, weariness, being overscheduled, neglecting of

¹⁸ Jeanne E. Sherrow, *It’s About Time: A Look at Leisure, Lifestyle & Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 61.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 61-62.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 63.

family friends and loved one, and most importantly a spiritually impaired relationship with God.

Martin C. Helldorfer in his book *Work Trap: Redefining Leisure, Redefining Work* assigns the term “*work fixation*” to the previously discussed phenomenon.²¹ Work fixation is not the same as spending long hours at an office. Nor is it necessarily avoided by spending much time pursuing leisure time activities. Rather, work fixation has to do with a way of living, of approaching life, and of being present to whatever we are involved in.²² Helldorfer further states:

As important as work is, it can become a problem. With little awareness and the best of intentions it is easy to slip into a worklike way of living. As that occurs, we forget about life beyond work, our hands become proficient but cold. We can be involved in some of the most exciting projects and yet find ourselves questioning their importance, simply because we have forgotten our lives on the way to becoming machinelike. That is a personal tragedy for each of us but a social one as well, for we build a world in which the life of the human spirit is diminished.²³

Work is a blessing and is vital to our existence on this side of heaven. Work can also be a great curse when its place is over-valued and misunderstood from a biblical and theological perspective. The high calling is to find the balance between work and leisure in one’s life. Ultimately, we must become liberating from the “*work trap*” by knowing what God’s intentions are for work in our lives, through scripture, and then begin to practice what the word of God instructs us to do relative to work.

²¹ Martin C. Helldorfer, *The Work Trap: Rediscovering Leisure, Redefining Work* (Mystic: Twenty-Third Publications, 1995), 14.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 7.

Sabbath

Ronald H. Stone, formerly of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, in his book *The Ultimate Imperative*, provides a meaningful discussion of contemporary issues surrounding the Sabbath. Stone opens his discussion by noting that observance of the Sabbath is one of the major distinguishing factors which made the Hebrews unique among surrounding nations. The fourth commandment is perhaps one of the most controversial in light of Jewish and Christian interpretations of the Sabbath and the teachings of Jesus on the legalistic and practical/humanistic duties related to the observance of the Sabbath (Mt 12:9-14; Mk 3:1-6; Lk 6:6-11).

Stone proceeds to elucidate upon three areas of controversy surrounding the Sabbath. First, is the origin of the Sabbath which may have had its beginnings in a primitive Semitic calendar. Additionally, there is the argument that early versions of the Fourth Commandment were stated in the negative form, thus appearing as “Thou shalt not despise the Sabbath day” or “Thou shalt not do any work upon the Sabbath.”²⁴ Second, there is the theological interpretation of the Sabbath to cease from labor. Stone in *The Ultimate Imperative* notes that Exodus and Deuteronomy provide divergent rationales for the cessation from work. Stone writes:

²⁴ Ronald H. Stone, *The Ultimate Imperative*, (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 1999), 62.

Exodus 20:11 grounds the imperative in the argument that God rested on the seventh day and after creating the world in six days. Without giving credence to any one-week theory of creation, we can appreciate the connection of the Sabbath by a priestly editor of Exodus with creation theology The second interpretation of the scriptures, given in Deuteronomy 5, does not relate the prohibition against work to the theology of creation, but to the theology of liberation. God brought Israel out of its servanthood to Egypt and commanded Israel to keep the Sabbath. It is ordered as a day of rest, with special emphasis on resting by servants, because the people of Israel are to remember that they were servants. No one is to work—the servants, the animals, the sojourners, the children, or the masters.²⁵

In essence, what Stone calls attention to are the theological arguments grounded in creation and liberation, which shape our understanding of the Sabbath.

A third concern brought to bear in this work, concerns the fact that Christians departed from the seventh-day prohibition. In the New Testament Jesus is found teaching and preaching in the synagogue on the seventh day and then healed on the Sabbath day. He constantly found himself embattled with the religious powers of the day over the *rigor* and *practicality* of Sabbath-keeping. Stone chronicles the progressive development of the concept of a Sabbath Day by outlining common practices among Christians and other religions. He notes that Christians chose the first day of the week, Muslims the sixth and those practicing Judaism, the seventh. He then proceeds to reveal that the apostle Paul and outstanding theologians, Athanasius and Augustine did not advocate for the keeping of a Christian Sabbath. It was not until Charlemagne ordered the termination of all work on the Sabbath day in 789 CE, did rulings come about by Church Councils on the Sabbath.²⁶

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 62-63.

One of the important sections in this writing by Stone is the contribution of theologian Karl Barth to our understanding of the Sabbath. Through the eyes of Barth, the Fourth Commandment is the foundation of the remaining commandments. The Sabbath in Barth's view, is a period of communion with and celebrative response to God. Barth leans toward a free acceptance of worship rather than a regimented ordering of observing the Sabbath. Stone brings forth four suggestions provided by Barth, which will heighten our understanding of the Sabbath. "First, Barth suggests that Sunday needs to be a day of both relaxation (or rest) and worship. Second, the Sabbath is to be celebrated in a joyous manner. Third, Sunday or the Sabbath is not to be a day for isolation, but a community holiday. Finally, he urges that the direction of rest from work, worship, and joy of Sunday illuminates the day of work, which follow the first days."²⁷ The Sabbath must be enjoyed for all that it represents theologically and spiritually, and must not be construed by twenty-first century Christians as merely a "day off" to attend church.

Sabbath Rest and Play

Hugo Rahner, in his book *Man at Play*, discusses the important concept of *eutrapelia*. This Greek term literally means "well turning" or "between the extremes." Aristotle and the scholastic Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas also addresses this concept. Rahner concludes that *eutrapelia* is that nimbleness of mind *and* spirit that makes it possible for man to play even when he is in earnest – "a kind of mobility of the soul, by which a truly cultured person turns to lovely, bright and relaxing things, without losing himself in them ... A spiritual elegance of movement in which his seriousness and

²⁷ Ibid., 65-66.

moral character can be perceived.”²⁸ It is this *eutrapelia* that should characterize Christian leisure. Instead of being dependent upon work for its meaning, leisure, properly understood, confers meaning upon work. As we consider God’s work vis-à-vis, the Creation and the universe, however complex it may be, it is the result of God’s free and joyful activity and not his work. It represents God at play, rather than God at work. Freeing this untapped virtue in Sabbath time frees a quality of the image of God in us. It is that quality of end-in-itself joy that expresses the nature of God’s loving, which has no ulterior motive of any kind.”²⁹ We dance, we sing, we laugh, all to the delight of God during this period of Sabbath rest.

In spite of the divine benefits of observing Sabbath, there is still a substantial amount of conflict and tension in contemporary times. The prime example is whether it is breaking the Sabbath in the Jewish and Christian traditions to work and play on the Sabbath. Jesus healed (Mt. 12:10-12), fed his disciples (Lk 6:1-2) and taught (Lk 13:10-16) on the Sabbath, exposing himself to almost an inordinate amount of criticism from the Pharisees (Mt. 12:1-10) and threats upon his life (Jn 5:16). It is not uncommon to find those who are anchored in “religious tradition” to be critical of those who work and play on the Sabbath. The staunch realities are that the Sabbath was made for humanity to worship God; engage in holy, restorative leisure (Mk 2:27); and that Jesus is the “Lord of the Sabbath.” (Mt 12:8; Mk 2:28)

²⁸ Gordon J. Dahl, “Time, Work and Leisure Today,” *The Christian Century*, 87, no. 6 (1971): 188.

²⁹ Tilden Edwards, *Sabbath Time* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room, 1993), 63.

Time

Bonnie Bowman Thurston, formerly of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, in her book *To Everything A Season* introduces four important theological reflections related to time. These four reflections give the additional context to the understanding of time in theological sense. First, time is a gift. Time is a part of the creative regimen of God, which came into existence after the creation of light. The gift of time can be a blessing or a curse depending on how one uses and values time. Second, the Bible moves us forward to consider time as the matrix of the sacred. This reflection on time suggest that we live in time in the present but must also consider the temporal implications of the eternal. The third reflection offered by Thurston suggests that time is experienced differently according to a diversity of situations. The essence of this reflection is that time is tied to our varying experiences in life and its pace is determined by those same situations or experiences. Lastly, the final reflection suggests that the only time we really have is now.³⁰ This reflection suggests we must live in the present and work to experience the important moments when we experience the presence of God and all that it brings. With present time comes opportunity.

As society moves further into the twenty-first century, there is evidence to suggest that society is still bound to the clock. As opposed to controlling time, we are controlled and constrained by time itself. We remain in the “clock on” and “clock off” mode in both work and leisure. Neo-Puritanism appears to be the order of the day as we struggle not to be consumed by work and struggle for a dose of well earned leisure. The Protestant work ethic is alive and well and at its foundation lies our enslavement to a digital time piece.

³⁰ Bonnie R. Thurston, *To Everything A Season* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999), 41-50.

Case in point is the utilization of the phrase “free time” which suggests that we have come to consider leisure less in terms of its intrinsic value than its value relative to work. “Even the pre-industrial expression “spare time”, traces of which still linger today, suggests something unexpectedly given or at least a contrast between occupied and unoccupied time.”³¹ Today, leisure is viewed by many as that which flows from, and inevitably prepares us for work.

Americans and the Use of Time: The Case of Time Deepening

Americans tend to have an “open-ended” view of the world, and our thoughts about time reflect this position. Time drives all that we do in our daily living. The progression of open-ended living has moved from the endless consumption of things to endless experiences, communications, and our very concept of our selves. Time is the essential variable in this formula. Because we understand that our time on this planet is finite, the expectation springs forth that we are capable of doing more with less time as we wrestle with the cogent reality that our days are numbered. Maximizing the benefits derived from time is a dominant value within our culture.

Time has become the most precious commodity and the ultimate scarcity for literally millions of Americans. According to a 1996 Wall Street Journal survey, forty percent of all Americans said that a lack of time was a bigger problem for them than lack of money.³² For the vast majority of people who reside on planet earth, the perception that time is more valuable than food, clothing and shelter may be unimaginable. The

³¹ Robert Banks, “The Emergence of Clockwork Man”, *CRUX* 20, no. 1 (1984): 10.

³² E. Graham and C. Crossan, “Too Much to Do, Too Little Time,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 8, 2002, 19.

problem of lack of time is, in most instances, a perceptual problem, which has very profound consequences for the mind, body and spirit.

Time is a creation of society. The way human beings think about time is largely based on their way of life and their worldview, rather than events in nature. Although all notions of time have in some way have been related to change, vastly different concepts have historically conditioned the individual to behave in a certain way and affect his or her understanding of others. Our very definition of any situation is directly shaped by how we perceive time. Time and how we think of it are expressions of our individual reality and what is important in an individual and collective sense. Time is a diverse concept which is redefined in each culture—and by each individual.³³

Thoughts related to time were circular and less precise, gradually changed to linear concepts in the Western world. Time became a straight line with a fixed beginning and fixed end. The passage of time was marked by human events moreso than events within nature. In Judaism and Christianity, there is a perceived end of time, a day of judgment and potential for salvation with the frame of that span of time. For Christians, the linear progression of history and its significant theological events became the foundation of the Christian faith. Time became a line of finite but uncertain length. The mechanization of time via the clock helped to alter our conceptions related to time. Time became quickly correlated with the economics of life. Time became “manned.” As a result, humanity became pressed and pressured for time. Work was driven by time and time driven by work. Time and its pressures vacillate between being good and bad or a combination

³³ John P. Robinson and Geoffrey Godbey, *Time for Life: The Surprising Ways Americans Use Their Time*, 2d ed. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 25-26.

thereof. Time pressures are a natural and healthy part of our daily living. There are time patterns which in the natural world that influence us because we are an inseparable part of nature. Ultimately the battle is for more time. Over the last decade, time pressures have intensified leaving the preponderance of society in a severe lurch or famine for time.

A reasonable explanation for the aforementioned time famine is provided by economist Steffan Linder who theorized that the increase in the pace of life came about in a systematic manner. Linder, theorizes that at one point, there was an equilibrium between work and leisure time of Americans in terms of that they accomplished within each time frame. As output per worker increased, time for each worker escalated in value, and therefore was considered scarce. The destroyed the ultra-sensitive balance between work and leisure, because people had increased the yield on their work, but not on their leisure. People attempted to increase the yield on their leisure by combining given activities with material goods. The shift away from leisure activities that could not be speeded up and combined with material goods (i.e., contemplation, writing) and increased time spent in activities that could be speeded up and coupled with material goods (i.e.- shopping driving for pleasure). Additionally, Linder posited that this phenomenon has led to a general scarcity of time.³⁴

The response to this time famine has been labeled “time deepening” behavior. The concept assumes that under tight time constraints and under the pressure of expanded interests and perhaps compulsion, people become capable of doing more within the time constraints. Robinson and Godbey in their book *Time for Life* suggest that time-deepening can occur in four ways: (1) attempting to speed up any given activity,

³⁴ Steffan Linder, *The Hurried Leisure Class* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 35-36.

(2) substituting a leisure activity that can be done more quickly for one that takes longer, (3) doing more than one activity simultaneously, and (4) undertaking a leisure activity with more precise regard to time.³⁵ Time-deepening is probably more likely to occur among upwardly mobile Americans who are middle or upper class. It may have many advantages relative to accomplishment, but it also has many noteworthy disadvantages. First, there is the disadvantage of generating additional stress from the compaction of activities within a narrow window of time. Second, “social” or “spiritual” intimacy is next to impossible due to rigid time constraints. Both require a substantial investment of time to be beneficial. Finally, there is the potential for this behavior to carry over into the world of work. One becomes hurried and multi-tasked in dual environments.³⁶ Americans have aspired to live more intensely. In doing so, we must understand the consequences. The compaction and neglect of critical activities that can be beneficial to our lives (e.g.- prayer, contemplation and meditation within leisure) could prove hazardous to mind, body and spirit, over time.

Time, Consumerism and Leisure

Much has been written about what some may call an “insatiable desire” to consume goods and services in the market place and the manner in which Christians and Americans in general use time. In many instances trade-offs of time for earning potential are prevalent within our culture. As a direct function of this problem many point to the erosion of time for spiritual growth within the context of leisure. Progressive reformers

³⁵ Robinson and Godbey, *Time for Life*, 39.

³⁶ Ibid., 39-41.

raise ethical and religious objections to the cycle of work and spend. For example,

Monsignor John A. Ryan, a prominent Catholic spokesman, articulated a common view:

“One of the most baneful assumptions of our materialistic industrial society is that all men should spend at least one-third of the twenty-four hour day in some productive occupation If men still have leisure [after needs are satisfied], new luxuries must be invented to keep them busy and new wants must be stimulated ... to take the luxuries off the market and keep the industries going. Of course, the true and rational doctrine is that when men have produced sufficient necessities and reasonable comforts and conveniences to supply all the population, they should spend what time is left in the cultivation of their intellects and wills, and in the pursuit of the higher life.”³⁷

Some have rather sarcastically, but appropriately labeled this phenomenon “the new economic gospel of consumption.”³⁸

Leisure Time

In an article entitled, “Seven Days of Play”, published in the March 1993 issue of *American Demographics* magazine, Jim Spring reports findings from a study which tracked leisure trends from June 1990 through June 1992. Specifically the study aimed to examine participation in leisure time pursuits among respondents 16 and older and explore the amount of time allocated for rest and leisure during the week. Spring reports the following significant findings in his research endeavor: On average, Americans have about forty-one (41) duty-free hours each week. Duty free hours are defined as hours that are not obligated to sleeping, working, keeping house, or doing personal care.³⁹

³⁷ John A. Ryan, in Benjamin Hunnicutt, *Work Without End: Abandoning Shorter Hours for the Right to Work*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 75.

³⁸ Benjamin Hunnicutt, *Work Without End: Abandoning Shorter Hours for the Right to Work*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 153.

Leisure time peaks on Sundays, at an average of more than seven (7) hours per adult, and drops to a low of five hours on Tuesday and Thursdays. On weekdays, Americans have five to six hours a day to call their own. However, there are approximately seven free hours on Saturday and Sunday.⁴⁰ The results of Spring's study may suggest that respondents have some form of commitment to observing a period of rest on Sunday which may account for the additional free time during the weekend.

According to researchers Geoffrey Godbey and Alan Graefe, of the Department of Leisure Studies, Penn State University, Americans are feeling more hurried than ever. Americans continue to jam more and more activities into a 24-hour day ("time-deepening"), leaving less and less time for relaxation. In 1992, the National Recreation and Park Association conducted a nationwide survey and reported that "one in three Americans (38 percent) said they "always felt rushed." In their article entitled, "*Rapid Growth in Rushin' Americans*", Godbey and Graefe report on the findings from the "Americans' Use of Time Project", directed by John Robinson of the University of Maryland. Some of the significant findings of this research effort include the following: The characteristics of the most time pressured Americans are similar to those of a 1985 sample- (a) aged 25-54; (b) full-time workers; and (c) parents. There was no substantial difference in those feeling rushed in small rural areas versus those residing in metropolitan areas. Women felt more stressed and rushed than men (37 percent versus 33 percent). The feeling of time pressure in America is growing stronger. Nearly half (48 percent) of Americans say they have less leisure time now that they did five years ago,

³⁹ Jim Spring, "Seven Days of Play," *American Demographics*, 1-3, March 1993 [journal on-line]; http://www.demographics.com/publications/ad93_ad/9303_ad/ad146.htm; Internet; accessed 24 October 2000).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

while only one respondent in five (22 percent) says they have more leisure time.⁴¹

Godbey and Graefe attempt to explain why people feel more rushed by pointing back to the data. More than one in three (38 percent) say that both work and leisure activities make them feel rushed; 36 percent blame it entirely on work, and 26 percent blame leisure. Employed men are much more likely to blame work (50 percent). And people who place more importance on work than leisure activities are more likely to report feeling rushed (47 percent), compared with just 28 percent of those who place equal or greater importance on play.⁴² The findings of Robinson, et. al., and the “Americans’ Use of Time Project” are significant as society endeavors to find the balance between work, leisure and their respective ethics. As American’s feel more rushed in their daily living, the need to commune with God during a period of Sabbath rest becomes more imperative.

Alison S. Wellner in an article appearing in the July 2000 edition of *American Demographic* magazine poses a startling question which strikes at the very heart of the blurring of the lines between work and leisure. Wellner asks in light of the aforementioned statement whether society has reached “the end of leisure?” Wellner argues that corporate American continues to drive the forces that blend work and the rest of life. In corporate America’s fervor to respond quickly to changes in the business environment, our conceptions and beliefs about work and leisure have been transformed. The article provides as an example the fact that “today’s average married, working couple labor a staggering 717 hours more each year than a working duo in 1969. The

⁴¹ Geoffrey Godbey and Alan Graefe, “Rapid Growth In Rushin’ Americans,” *American Demographics* 1-2, April 1993 [journal on-line]; available from http://www.demographics.com/publications/ad/93_ad/9304_ad/ad161.htm; Internet; accessed 24 October 2004.

⁴² Ibid.

tools that were supposed to free us from the shackles of our desks have bound us to our jobs in ways unimaginable just a decade ago. They are electronic umbilical cords to the workplace.”⁴³

Wellner does not propose that an end to leisure as we know is near, but it does signal a change in our concept of freedom from our source of employment. Rather than trying to find hours of the day that are completely free from work or push through hours totally devoid of leisure, attempts are now made to meld the two together. Wellner cites the poignant example of corporate business trips in which company business and family vacations are combined to the benefit of the organization and the family of the employee. The article further cites statements from corporate employees who say that “the leisure life got old after a while.”⁴⁴

Lastly, Wellner’s investigation brings forth evidence that “the blurring of the line between work and leisure is good in some ways because it allows you to spend more time at home or with your family.” Several employees noted that the extra time found at home might be used to engage in more work. One employee closes the article with the statement, “work is voracious,” but “leisure its not.” Wellner’s discussion within her article brings to bear the fact that many Christians and non-Christians again are trapped in the paradigm of the Protestant work ethic. With the demand to produce on the part of corporate America and the willingness to trade sacred time for wealth, observance of a Sabbath, engagement in meaningful periods of rest for the benefit of body and spirit, and the pursuit of leisure to balance work, seem to be impossibility.

⁴³ Alison Stein Wellner, “The End of Leisure?,” *American Demographics* 1, July 2000 [journal on-line]; available from http://www.demographics.com/publications/ad/00_ad/0007_ad/ad000701.htm; Internet; accessed 24 October 2004.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

Despite the fact that Americans are seeing small gains in leisure time and there appears to be a strong affirmation of the “Protestant ethic” by many American workers, there is also evidence that suggests that many are seeking a balance between work and leisure. According to a 1996 Roper Poll, the number of Americans who agree that “work is the most important thing” now matches the number who say that “leisure is the most important thing,” and a growing proportion say that the two are equally important.

Roper Starch Worldwide, periodically asks a random sample of Americans whether they agree that “Work is the most important thing, and the purpose of leisure time is to recharge people’s batteries for their job,” or that “leisure time is the important thing, and the purpose of work is to make it possible to have leisure time,” or if they think that work and leisure are equally important. “In 1975 and 1980, 48 percent of respondents chose work, while 36 percent chose leisure. Work led leisure by an even larger margin (13 percentage points) in 1985. But in a dramatic reversal, 41 percent chose leisure first in 1989, compared with 36 percent who chose work. In the economy of 1991 and 1993, leisure led by 6 and 11 percentage points, respectively.”⁴⁵

The results of the survey in 1996 suggested that there may be a reversal again. In 1995, 37 percent of Americans chose work first, while 36 percent chose leisure. But while work and leisure struggled for the lead that year, there was a steady growth in the number of Americans who chose a balance. The proportion who noted that work and leisure are equally important increased from 15 percent in 1980 to 20 percent in 1989, and 25 percent in 1993 and 1995.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ The Work Ethic in Moderation, *American Demographics* 1, May 1996 [journal on-line]; available from http://www.demographics.com/publications/fc/96_nn/9605_nn/9605nn04.htm; Internet; accessed 24 October 2004.

This research effort also yielded some interesting demographic results. Based on the data, America's strongest work ethic is found in small cities and towns (county population of 35,000-150,000), where 49 percent of the residents put work first, and in the Midwest, where 45 percent do. It is weakest in the 25 largest metropolitan areas, where 30 percent put work first, and in the western states where 31 percent do. The groups most likely to put work first are those with household incomes of \$75,000 or more (43 percent), those with household incomes of \$15,000 or less (42 percent), college graduates (41 percent), and Republicans (41 percent). Those most likely to put leisure first are white-collar workers (42 percent), parents of young children (41 percent), and those between the ages of 18-29 (40 percent).⁴⁷ The refreshing portion of this study is that there seems to be a growing number of people in country who are now understanding the value of both work and leisure. As a function of this discovery, there is a growing desire to find the balance between the two.

Participation in Religious Activities and Leisure

John P. Robinson and Geoffrey Godbey, in their pioneering longitudinal study, and later book *Time for Life: The Surprising Ways Americans Use Their Time*, examines trends among Americans related to participation in religious/spiritual activities and leisure. Their study produced some interesting and significant findings. For instance, when available free time for 1985 was analyzed it was discovered that Americans spend less than one-percent (.9%) of their time participating in religious activities which included going to church and engaging in activities for the purpose of spiritual

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

development.⁴⁸

Robinson and Godbey also noted in their study that among more formal uses of free time, religious observance (including reading and studying the Bible) has remained constant across time and across gender-employment categories over time. The researchers also state that a higher percentage of time could be added to this category if we were to consider participation in religious organization as a religious/social activity rather than an organization activity. Additionally, the participation rate in religious activities among women is almost twice the rate of men. Participation increases with age, with those aged 55-64 reporting twice as much time in religious activities as those aged 18-34. Blacks participate in religious activities twice as much as whites. Participation is rather equivalent across education categories, but it is well below average among more affluent individuals. Time spent with religious activities tends to be shorter for people who work longer hours, but not on a regular basis. It is marginally lower among the never married, among non-parents, and among parents of preschool children. It is higher in rural than urban areas, and, not surprisingly, about eight times more prevalent on Sundays as on other days of the week.⁴⁹ There were no questions asked about religious affiliation or strength of affiliation in the 1985 study, thus making further detailed analysis taxing.

When the variables of age, race and status were examined within the context of leisure time, Robinson and Godbey again report interesting and significant findings. In reference to age and time use, the researchers report that senior citizens spend markedly more time participating in religious activities than any other age group. They also report

⁴⁸ Robinson and Godbey, 125.

⁴⁹Ibid., 173.

that within the context of race, status and free time, African Americans were expected to spend more time participating in church and religious activities than other racial groups. The authors cite the historical values of the black church and its role in helping African-Americans combat and manage the evils of racism and oppression within society as the driving force behind this finding. African-Americans spent twice as much time worshipping than whites in this study. Regression analysis afforded the researchers the capacity to state that race is an important explanatory factor in religious participation and the use of free time.⁵⁰

Another significant area of inquiry within his study was an examination of attitudes and behaviors related to leisure time. Specifically, a through examination of time diaries kept by respondents was implemented. Respondents were asked to log the number of minutes spent on a variety of activities within their day and to rate their level of satisfaction with each of the activities recorded. For religion, the differences were 21 minutes a day for time-diary religious activity among those deriving great satisfaction from religion to only three minutes among those saying none (or some or little satisfaction).⁵¹

Finally, Robinson and Godbey examined leisure time as social capital. Social capital is defined as, “features of social life—networks, norms and trust—that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives.”⁵² From 1965-85 there was no change (0.9) across the study period, denoting that participation and the

⁵⁰ Ibid., 221-225.

⁵¹ Ibid., 248.

⁵² Ibid., 248.

apportionment of time for religious pursuits was constant. Time spent within the religious practice social capital indicator remained constant at approximately one hour a week: about the same amount of time as for other organizational activity. They also conclude that the proportion of Americans attending weekly religious services has significantly declined in recent years, which, runs counter to what other national surveys have reported. The authors conclude that what their data on religious observance conveys is that for those who attend services, time per attender has increased across time. In this case, greater attendance yields greater spiritual benefits for those who attend regularly. It is the religiously rich who are getting richer, or becoming more dedicated in their beliefs.⁵³

Leisure and the Church

Since the first century the church has played a vital role in influencing values about work and leisure. Frequently, direction about the virtues of work and perils of leisure were espoused from the pulpit. Lee J. deLisle chronicled the history of the church in Europe, during the Reformation period, and its impact on leisure. deLisle concluded that the Protestant movement regarded leisure, or free time, as a threat to salvation and social control, requiring a prescriptive approach to ensure proper use. deLisle also noted that additional research is needed to examine the relationship between religion and leisure.⁵⁴

⁵³ Ibid., 344.

⁵⁴ Lee J. deLisle, "Leisure and Reformation Theology: An Analysis of the Impact of the Protestant Reformation on the Perception and Use of Leisure, 1500-1700 A.D." (Ph.D. diss., The University of Connecticut, 2002).

Troy Messenger in *Holy Leisure: Recreation and Religion in God's Square Mile* provides a sterling example of what can happen to a congregation when it individually and collectively begins to embrace God's ideas about work, rest, Sabbath, time and leisure. Messenger uses a case study approach to illustrate how a Methodist congregation in a small settlement in Ocean Grove, New Jersey began to live out scripture, particularly scripture related to Sabbath. This congregation, through a life of prayer and meditation on the word of God, practiced piety and yet embraced a balanced life of work and Christian leisure.⁵⁵ Congregants worked, worshipped and played together to the glory of God. Optimally, this is where we all should aspire to be. A ministry project of a similar nature can aid the context of this project in taking a giant step in that direction.

Often the tradition of the church and unfounded beliefs about leisure become merged. What then transpires are incorrect, almost heretical beliefs that are conveyed to congregants, which are internalized as gospel truths. The end result is people who live in bondage and require liberating to enjoy the abundant life God has provided. An excerpt from an employment application extracted from the website of Indiana Wesleyan University illustrates how our personal and corporate theologies become intertwined relative to beliefs about work and leisure. Note the following:

“Scripture teaches that all our actions (work, study, play) should be performed to the glory of God. We endeavor, therefore, to be selective in choices of entertainment and recreation, promoting those which strengthen the body of Christ and avoiding those which would diminish sensitivity to Christian responsibility.”⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Troy Messenger, *Holy Leisure: Recreation and Religion in God's Square Mile* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 63-64.

⁵⁶ Indiana Wesleyan University, “Community Lifestyle Statement.” *Employment Application*, Indiana Wesleyan University. [employment application on-line]; available from <http://www.indwes.edu/hr/applications/files/appadmin.pdf>; Internet; .accessed 4 January 2005.

The aforementioned statement is in many ways, an accurate portrayal of what godly leisure encompasses. The staunch reality is that this example is more an anomaly and does not typically represent what the norm may be.

Ruth V. Russell in *Pastimes: The Context of Contemporary Leisure* provides meaningful insight into the role of religion and leisure behavior. Russell states, religion is a demographic factor that commonly influences leisure behaviors.”⁵⁷ Russell further posits, “most religious organizations are concerned with human goodness and thus teach doctrines that promote healthful expressions of leisure. Some religious organizations also use recreational activities as a means of spreading their particular creed.”⁵⁸ Russell’s candid remarks reiterate the inherent value of leisure with a religious framework. Additionally, the author casts a bright light on the how doctrine espoused by the church can positively or negatively impact leisure behavior of the individual or in mass.

Marc Emard investigated the historical relationship between religion and leisure as well as the role of the church as a provider of leisure services. In his doctoral dissertation, “Religion and Leisure: A Case Study of the Role of the Church as a Provider of Recreation in Small Ontario Communities (Canada),” Emard surmised that the church has played a major role in regulating leisure patterns and lifestyles. Emard also concluded that during the nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth century the church began to realize that its influence over parishioners relative to leisure choices began to decline. As

⁵⁷ Ruth V. Russell, *Pastimes: The Context of Contemporary Leisure*, 3d ed. (Champaign: Sagamore, 2005), 74.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 74-75.

a result, the twentieth century featured a proliferation of church programs in an effort to regain its hold on parishioners.⁵⁹

Keith Ernce in his doctoral dissertation entitled “Church Recreation in the Southern Baptist Convention as a Leisure Consumer, Leisure Provider and Member of the Leisure Services Delivery System” investigated the Southern Baptist Church as a leisure consumer, its development as a leisure provider, and its role as a member of a leisure services delivery system. Two hundred thirty six churches were interviewed in Texas, Missouri, and Oklahoma. The findings and conclusions of this study indicated that the church did consume leisure time as a direct agent because it functioned during leisure time, as well as directly, by the values it presented its membership, which impacted future leisure choices. Additionally, the study concluded that leisure choices were heavily influenced by church tradition and doctrine.⁶⁰

In regard to the African American experience with the church and leisure, Patricia Melton in her doctoral dissertation, “An Investigation of Leisure Through the Life Course of Elderly African-Americans” underscores the influence of religious tradition and doctrine on attitudes about leisure among elderly congregants. The study found that religion was an important determinant of leisure pursuits to the extent that they were

⁵⁹ Marc R. Emard, “Religion and Leisure: A Case Study of the Role of the Church as a Provider of Recreation in Small Ontario Communities (Canada)” (Ph.D. diss., The University of Waterloo, Canada, 1990).

⁶⁰ Keith Ernce, “Church Recreation in the Southern Baptist Convention as a Leisure Consumer, Leisure Provider and Member of the Leisure Services Delivery System” (Ph.D. diss., The University of New Mexico, 1987).

allowed. Another key finding of the study was that the value of the Protestant work ethic may have influenced the leisure experiences of the study participants.⁶¹

There is empirical evidence to support the position that the attitudes and behaviors displayed by pastors relative to work and leisure influence the attitudes and behaviors of congregants. Richard Paul conducted an investigation entitled, “*An Investigation and an Analysis, Leading to a Reassessment of the Minister’s Attitudes and Time Spent in Leisure Activities*” which examined attitudes of Lutheran pastors about work and leisure. The inquiry revealed that creating balance between work and leisure in the life of the pastor and congregants was a serious challenge. The investigator concluded that there was a high degree of ambivalence among clergy on the subject of leisure. The results of the study point out the need for clergy to honestly take examine the place of leisure in their lives and to assess their attitudes toward it and their work. The author also urges clergy to examine the negative conveyances of their attitudes about work and leisure to their congregants.⁶²

Based on the work of authors previously cited in this section, church tradition has a tremendous impact on leisure behavior. What is interesting is that much of church tradition is grounded in a mistaken interpretation of the “Puritan” or “Protestant Ethic.” Contrary to what has been erroneously written and stated about the Puritans, they in many ways were advocates of Godly leisure. They promoted enjoyment of constructive leisure pursuits, physical activity and recreation, celebrations around culture and arts and

⁶¹ Patricia A. Melson, “An Investigation of Leisure Through the Life of Elderly African Americans” (Ph.D. diss., University of Oregon, 1995).

⁶² Richard D. Paul, “An Investigation and an Analysis, Leading to a Reassessment of the Minister’s Attitudes Toward and Time Spent in Leisure Activities” (Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1980).

were general proponents of fun. Leland Ryken in *Work and Leisure in Christian Perspective* calls attention to several false charges leveled against the Puritans which carried over into the teachings of the church. These charges include:

1. The Puritans were opposed to fun.
2. Puritans did not allow sport or recreation related activities.
3. Puritans abolished all holidays.
4. Puritans had negative attitudes toward culture and the arts.
5. Puritans took color out of life by wearing drab, darkly colored clothing.⁶³

In all actuality the Puritans made several great contributions to the promotion of leisure within the church. The difficulty comes in balancing their prohibition of some forms of leisure on the Sabbath, legalistic and utilitarian viewpoints, and sometimes being “uptight” about leisure against their many contributions.

Unfortunately, religious tradition portrays leisure as sinful, slothful, self-indulgent, and idolatrous. Ryken in the same book points out many of the problems which the church has precipitated relative to work and leisure. Ryken posits that often because of the lack of teaching on subjects related to work and leisure, our capacity to value leisure apart from work is diminished. Additionally, Ryken maintains that congregants have not learned to enjoy “guilt free” leisure, or simply enjoying themselves without feeling hedonistic.⁶⁴ Despite the fact that we live in a consumptive, permissive, and in some cases hedonistic society the opposite attitude is sometime concealed. Psychologist label this phenomenon *anhedonia*—the inability to feel pleasure—and

⁶³ Leland Ryken, *Work and Leisure in Christian Perspective* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1987), 100-104

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 57.

regard it as an abnormality in personality. In essence, the aforementioned comment pertains to those who will not relax and enjoy themselves.

Ryken notes “an irony is that some of the very people when they take time to for leisure are often the same people who feel guilty because they work too much.”⁶⁵ Unfortunately, the doctrine and dogma of the church are sometimes more damaging than helpful as related to work and leisure. As a result a long list of prohibitions on certain forms of leisure pursuits has manifested. Thee list of “shall not do’s” for God’s elect includes, but is not limited to the consumption of alcohol, gambling, dancing, frequenting bars, attending “R” rated movies, and a host of others. What has evolved as a misinterpretation of doctrine and theology has resulted in legalism and enslavement.

Leonard Doohan in *Leisure: A Spiritual Need* provides insight into the church’s role in aiding congregants to understand the role and value of leisure. Doohan states, “the leisure moments in life offer the wise the opportunity to intensify developing some attitudes that should be integrated into a leisurely life and to decrease or remove those attitudes that impede it.”⁶⁶ Doohan is advocating that the church take a leadership role in educating congregants on the productive use of leisure and the need to balance work and leisure in the quest for godly living. Toward the aforementioned end, Doohan suggests that the attitude of the church and the individual must reflect six critical tasks. First, the congregation must *read*, meaning study the word of God about leisure. Second, *relax*, taking the Sabbath commandment seriously, engaging in both physical and spiritual rest. The third task, brought forth by Doohan suggests that everyone must use leisure to *re-create*, meaning become refreshed from the inside outward. Leisure can be a useful tool

⁶⁵ Ibid., 56.

⁶⁶ Leonard Doohan. *Leisure: A Spiritual Need* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1990), 87-88.

for physical and spiritual renewal. The author proceeds to infer that we must *re-think* our attitudes about work and leisure, individually and corporately. Doohan also argues that we must embrace leisure as a tool to *re-focus* on our priorities within and outside of the church. Finally, the author mandates that every Believer must *rejoice* over the gift of leisure.⁶⁷

Perhaps the solution lies in what Andrew Purves and Charles Partee in *Encountering God: Christian Faith in Turbulent Times* call a “renewal of thinking.”⁶⁸ As we encounter God and grow in faith, faith seeks understanding. Understanding leads to new ways of thinking about scripture, doctrine, stewardship and most importantly how live before God and in community. The authors state,

Encountering God means that God commands our attention—in one way or another. But we have insisted as strongly as we can that our growth in knowledge of God is not by way of us thinking about ourselves. We grow in knowledge of God by learning about God, because God has given us the Word of God, first in covenantal history with Israel and second in the incarnation of the Word in Jesus Christ.⁶⁹

The essence of what Purves and Partee propose is that we can be transformed through encounters with God, primarily through the study of scripture. Our views about work, rest, Sabbath, time and leisure can be altered for the good when we examine the manner in which Jesus lived and addressed each item. With each encounter, the “renewal of thinking” is imminent.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 88-90.

⁶⁸ Purves and Partee, *Encountering God*, 11.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

Leisure Counseling

Andrew H. Purves, Hugh Thompson Kerr Professor of Pastoral Theology, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary once noted in a class lecture that “pastoral care at its foundation is all about caring for the soul.” At its core are love and compassion which provide the basis for healing the wounds of the soul (Mt 9:35-10:1; Jn 10:10). Without question, too much work and the lack of rest and leisure can be damaging to both body and spirit. Jesus illustrated his concern for the lack of leisure in the lives of His disciples in Mark 6:30-31 when he directed them to remove themselves from the rigor of ministry and rest toward the end of restoring the body and spirit. Arguably, the aforementioned account can be cited as the first example of biblically-based leisure counseling in the New Testament.

Ruth V. Russell in *Pastimes: The Context of Contemporary Leisure* provides a working overview of leisure counseling. Russell states, “leisure counseling is quite similar to other forms of personal assistance services, the object of leisure counseling is to determine an individual’s leisure interests and needs, and then to assist him or her in locating activities and options to meet these needs.”⁷⁰ Russell further notes, “often leisure counseling is delivered through individual or group sessions, uses assessment instruments, and provides referral services. In leisure counseling, leisure is considered a therapeutic tool that can be directly applied to improving a person’s situation and happiness.”⁷¹

⁷⁰ Russell, 372.

⁷¹ Ibid., 373.

There are multiple definitions of leisure counseling, with no one definition being used predominately in the literature or professional practice. Almost exclusively the collection of definitions are used by vocational psychologist, leisure services practitioners working in the therapeutic area of the discipline and to a lesser degree researchers. The term is noticeably absent from dictionaries which define terms related to pastoral care and counseling and Christian Education literature. The grave irony lies in the fact that at the core of biblically based leisure lie precepts and principles related to work, rest, Sabbath, time, leisure, and leisure counseling.

Larry C. Loesch and Paul T. Wheeler in *Principles of Leisure Counseling*, provide a series of definitions which have different intents. For example, an avocational definition presented by R.P. Overs reads as follows: “Avocational counseling, sometimes called recreational counseling or counseling for leisure activities, helps individuals with their choice of and adjustment to, avocational activities.”⁷² This definition is derived from the “work” definition of leisure. Implicit is the focus on activities, as opposed to time or intrinsic value of leisure.

A second definition closely resembling other definitions frequently found in the professional counseling literature is presented by C.F. McDowell. McDowell defined leisure counseling as: “... a helping process which facilitates interpretive, affective and/or behavioral changes in others toward attainment of their leisure well-being.”⁷³ This definition is notable in its effort at comprehensiveness. That is, the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of human functioning are alluded to.

⁷² Larry C. Loesch and Paul T. Wheeler, *Principles of Leisure Counseling* (Minneapolis: Educational Media Corp., 1982), 66.

⁷³ Ibid., 69.

A third definition is offered by Shank and Kennedy who examined all of the literature related to leisure counseling and constructed the following definition: “Leisure counseling involves a careful examination of a person’s background, beliefs, values, and attitudes and becomes education process as well as a remedial counseling service.”⁷⁴

A final, more theologically based definition can be developed utilizing Shank and Kennedy’s definition as a point of departure. For the purpose of this study a definition which is grounded in theology is needed. The definition reads in this manner:

“Leisure counseling involves a careful examination of a person’s faith, understanding of biblical terms such as work, rest, Sabbath, leisure and the subsequent beliefs, values, and attitudes pertaining to each term. The role of the pastor, lay counselor, Christian educator becomes developing an educational process as well as a counseling service which has empowerment and transformation as its goals.”

This definition is more suited to directing leisure counseling efforts which are focused and results oriented.

Geoffrey Godbey in his book *Leisure in Your Life: An Exploration* (6th ed.) summarizes the myriad of definitions of leisure counseling in the following statement:

In all the conceptualizations, leisure counseling seems to be (1) expanding consciousness and clarifying values, (2) providing information about leisure resources and otherwise “enabling” the client, and/or (3) changing values ... It is in regard to changing values that leisure counseling may be controversial ... Perhaps leisure counseling is best done by those agencies/organizations that seek to change behaviors.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Ibid., 70.

⁷⁵ Geoffrey Godbey. *Leisure in Your Life: An Exploration*, 6th ed. (State College: Venture, 2003), 276-277).

The critical point Godbey makes in the previous excerpt is that leisure counseling is important in helping the client clarify values, but its primary aim must be to aid the client in changing behaviors.

Other Related Literature

This final section of the chapter provides an overview of literature related to health, spirituality and leisure. One of the primary implications of an unbalanced life is the manifestation of health challenges which range from burnout to spiritual disintegration. This section cites the work of several authors which address the aforementioned subject matter.

Spirituality, Spiritual Health and Leisure

One budding area of leisure-based research is leisure and spirituality. For example, Margaret Kopish in her doctoral dissertation entitled *Attitudes Toward Authority and Change Among Retired Roman Catholic Women*, addresses this issue. Kopish conducted life history interviews with eight retired women of the same religious community covering family background, self-description, gender issues, relationships, religious life, prayer, spirituality, leisure, life transitions, and aging. The interviewees ranged in age from 70-80 and each had been nuns for more than fifty years. Grounded theory principles were utilized in data analysis. One of the significant findings of this research endeavor was that the constructive use of leisure time played a significant role in the development of the spiritual life of each party interviewed. Additionally, three

pastoral strategies were developed, one which included placing a greater emphasis on the value of leisure and leisure time as a mechanism to draw closer to God.⁷⁶

Paul Heintzman in his article *Putting Some Spirit into Recreation Services for People With Disabilities* raises the important issue of spiritual health and leisure. The context of discussion is the spiritual benefits of leisure for persons with disabilities. In spite of the context, there are general applications which relate to this project.

Heintzman notes the following:

There is a difference between a worldly style of leisure and one filled with a deep sense of spirit. ... We risk leisure pathology in our clients and ourselves if we believe leisure can only be bought, planned, scheduled, earned, put into a timeframe, consumed, experienced on the physical or mental plane of our ego. Leisure wellness must include the awareness and expression of one's sense of spirit. ... The greatest challenge of the leisure profession as a whole, and therapeutic recreators specifically, is to know this spirit well.⁷⁷

Heintzman notes that “quality of life,” is very much associated with spiritual well-being and personal characteristics such as self-determination, joy, contentment and satisfaction. The degree to which this understanding of quality of life overlaps with spirituality can be illustrated by the following definition of spiritual health:

Optimal spiritual health may be considered as the ability to develop our spiritual nature to its fullest potential. This would include our ability to discover and articulate our own basic purpose in life, learn how to experience love, joy, peace and fulfillment and how to help ourselves and others achieve their full potential.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Margaret Kopish, “Attitudes Toward Authority and Change Among Retired Roman Catholic Women” (Ph.D. diss., Garrett Theological Seminary, 1990), 1.

⁷⁷ Paul Heintzman, “Putting Some Spirit Into Recreation Services for Persons With Disabilities,” *Journal of Leisurability*, 24, 2, Spring 1997 [journal on-line]; available from <http://www.lin.ca.resource/htmlvol24/v24n2a4.htm>; Internet; accessed 4 January 2005.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

Heintzman citing the work of several authors proceeds to define spiritual health in the following manner:

A high level of faith, hope, and commitment in relation to a well-defined worldview or belief system that provides a sense of meaning and purpose to existence in general, and that offers an ethical path to personal fulfillment which includes connectedness with self, others, and a higher power or larger reality.⁷⁹

“The quality of life outcome is extremely significant because it touches upon the heart of what it means to be human, and thus it is within this context that a person is viewed holistically rather than as having a dysfunctional part which requires therapy. For quality of life to be the central focus of, it is imperative that the spiritual dimension of life be recognized”.⁸⁰

Following his definition of spiritual health, the author identifies three factors which contribute to spiritual health. First, is a “well-defined worldview or belief system that provides purpose, meaning, and motivation to life. Spiritually healthy persons have a coherent worldview which interprets reality for them and provides a consistent belief system, and worldview answers questions such as ‘where did I come from,’ ‘why am I here,’ ‘how do I find meaning and fulfillment in life,’ and ‘what will happen when I die’. Usually these questions are explained in relation to a larger reality or a higher power. By explaining these questions, the worldview offers a sense of purpose and meaning to life and a path for personal fulfillment which provides beliefs, values, as well as rules of conduct and a sense of moral ethics.”⁸¹

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

The second factor contributing to spiritual health is “selflessness, connectedness with, and concern for others’. Honesty, integrity, selflessness, compassion and connectedness with others are the characteristics of spiritual health found in most reviews of spirituality. Persons who focus on pleasure-seeking and self-gratification, as opposed to selflessness, are more susceptible to unhappiness, a sense of emptiness, mood disorders, and addictions, all of which are contrary to spiritual health characteristics.”⁸²

The third factor enhancing spiritual health is “‘high levels of personal faith and commitment in relation to the worldview and belief system.’ Spiritual health is dependent not only on intellectual knowledge of a world view, but on an ability to live out that perspective and model it for others. Without a personal sense of belief, hope, and faith, the motivation and level of commitment required to follow the path outlined by the worldview would not be realized. Faith and hope are necessary for a person to be empowered to be selfless, compassionate and caring. With commitment, hope and faith, the quest for meaning and purpose, as prescribed by the worldview, can assist the person to achieve high levels of spiritual health and the associated connectedness with others, self-esteem, and personal fulfillment.”⁸³

Burnout and Leisure Among Clergy

Burnout is a serious problem among clergy and those who labor faithfully in the church. It is an issue that can be correlated to an imbalance between the vocational pursuit of ministry and the inability to actively exercise “self-care” through the productive use of leisure. There are a myriad of factors that contribute to burnout among

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

clergy, but I would argue that one of the principal predictors or indicators of burnout, is the lack of leisure.

Jesus in Mark 6:30-32, points to the problem of guarding against burnout from the rigors of ministry. In this passage, the apostles return from a mission trip and excitedly and anxiously begin dispatching the details of their encounters. Jesus, understanding fully the psycho-emotional, spiritual and physical rigors of ministry commands that they pause and enter into a state of rest. The Apostles were implored to go into an uninhabited place to rest, recuperate and recover, in preparation for subsequent labor. They were commanded to cease their labor and enter into a state of restful, holy leisure. This act underscores the crux of the problem with contemporary ministry and the clergypersons who labor with ministry—the failure to balance the work of ministry with a life of leisure.

In his article *Coming to Terms With Clergy Burnout*, William E. Hume addresses the reasons for this pervasive concern and potential therapies to alleviate and manage the root causes of the problem. In response to why the burnout phenomenon is occurring at an alarming rate, Hume provides three primary arguments. First, Hume argues that clergypersons are “crisis” persons. They are directly involved in the pain and suffering of life, sometimes at remarkable levels. Clergy are immersed in stressful counseling situations, death and bereavement daily and yet move forward, to the next issue at hand, without pausing to recover. Second, clergy are the only profession with a built-in community with their jobs. This factor is both an asset and a detriment. All too often clergy are caught in a constant barrage of conflicts, with and between members. These conflicts can leave the clergyperson wounded and disillusioned. The seeds of

burnout becomes implanted in strained relationships. Lastly, according to Hume, many clergy find it difficult to live out their own image—conviction—of ministry. Often there is conflict over expectations from the parish, denomination and within oneself. The unresolved conflicts fuel anxiety and stress.

Hume proceeds to offer solutions to remedy the onset of burnout. He proposes that clergypersons and others who are actively engaged in ministry seek a balance in their lives. There must be balance struck between the work of ministry and the calling to leisure. Pivotal to achieving balance is mandating periods of leisure as Jesus prescribed in Mark 6:30-32. Rather than focusing all energies into the work of ministry and family obligations, Hume suggests that clergypersons should have other “balancing pursuits.”⁸⁴

The author suggests four key leisure-oriented strategies to aid clergy in the battle against burn-out. First, there must be time for spiritual development—prayer and meditation. Prayer and meditation represent times for the cessation of activity and opportunities for centering. It is “sacred time” in which the clergyperson is able to focus on God through his Word, toward the end of becoming open – to observe, listen and receive. What he is proposing is a period of exercising the spiritual dimension of leisure. Second, Hume calls for clergypersons to make time for pursuits other than ministry. There is a need to release from the bondage of work and look for non-work related challenges which will make the spirit dance with joy. The third point that the author suggests is to make time for physical exercise on a regular basis. Clergypersons are encouraged to engage in active leisure pursuits to lower levels of stress and recapture vitality. Finally, Hume recommends that there be time allotted for social development.⁸⁵

⁸⁴William E. Hume, “Coming to Terms With Clergy Burnout,” *The Christian Ministry*, 14, no. 1, (1984): 6.

There is some evidence that clergypersons operate within a closed circle, having very few friends. We all are social beings and thus should periodically pursue the social dimension of leisure for our personal development.

Howard M. Stanton-Rich and Seppo E. Iso-Ahola of the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Maryland conducted a study on burnout among clergy persons. In their research effort, they concluded that one reason clergy fall victim to burnout is the lack of balance in their lives. Particularly, there is a sorely lacking balance of work and leisure. Missing from their lives are appropriate “time-out behaviors” or leisure activities which serve to ward off unwanted stressors. These “leisure buffers” can turn around the adverse effects of stress on mental and physical health. The authors define burnout as a psychological construct that is defined as “a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do “people work” of some kind.” They denote that burnout begins with emotional exhaustion, moves to depersonalization and then progresses to feelings of hopelessness that is the result one some sense of reduced personal accomplishment.⁸⁶

The researchers sought to examine whether the demographic variables of age, gender, marital status, education, years in service, and years in the present job contributed directly or indirectly to burnout among clergy, through their effects on leisure behavior, satisfaction, attitude, and self-determination. Additionally, they addressed the question whether leisure behavior, satisfaction, attitude, and self-

⁸⁵ Ibid, 6.

⁸⁶ Howard M. Stanton-Rich and Seppo E. Iso-Ahola, “Burnout and Leisure,” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 1998, no. 2:1932.

determination is associated with burnout.⁸⁷

Stanton-Rich and Iso-Ahola selected clergy as the study population for a variety of reasons. Most notably, clergy are very susceptible to burnout due to long hours, and because of the physical and psychological demands of ministry. Additionally they cited factors such as the setting of unrealistic goals, tenuous time constraints, and the problem of role overload, ambiguity, and responsibility as part of the rationale for selecting this group. A systematic random sample of 438 clergypersons from the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church was drawn. Questionnaires were mailed to clergy included the sample and yielded a response rate of 55%. Some of the key findings of this study include the following:

1. Leisure behavior and leisure satisfaction had a significant (inverse) direct effect on all three factors of burnout. Thus, the higher the leisure behavior and leisure satisfaction, the lower the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization.
2. Engagement in satisfying leisure behaviors and self-determined activities reduces burnout.
3. There is a need for a “leisure policy” among clergy to promote the healthy use of leisure time and leisure pursuits as a prevention measure.⁸⁸

This study validates the assumption that the constructive use of leisure in its many dimensions can be a tremendous asset to those in ministry.

Peeter Vanker, in his doctoral dissertation, which examined the leisure time expenditure patterns of married clergy discovered that many of the subjects in the study had experienced a marked reduction in their leisure time over several decades, as had

⁸⁷ Ibid., 1933.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 1945-1947.

many others. This reduction in leisure time led to heightened levels of stress and symptoms of burn-out. He also noted that consumerism and guilt were critical barriers to a biblical and theological realization of leisure time. The project affirmed a closed linkage between the biblical Sabbath and “true” leisure, emphasizing the importance of caring for the body and the spirit.⁸⁹

James Anderson, in his research effort entitled “Developing a Pattern of Sabbath Rest for Pastors”, disclosed that “a pastor needs more than a day off,” he needs a “Sabbath rest.” Anderson’s research addressed and confirmed that burnout, dropout, emotional drain, and spiritual fatigue were all experienced by pastors included in the study group. He also discovered that observance of the Sabbath and a commitment to “dedicated leisure time” enhanced the quality of life of those included in the study population.⁹⁰

Summary

Work is an important element within society. The trend based on the research of John de Graaf and Ralph Keyes suggests that Americans are overworked and very driven by the clock. At risk are personal health, the well-being of families, and most importantly, one's spiritual well-being which is sacrificed as a function of the lack of balance between work and leisure.

There are numerous definitions for the term leisure, many which are interdisciplinary in nature. For the purposes of this study, the most useful definitions are

⁸⁹ Peeter Vanker, “No Time to Watch Sunsets Anymore: The Impact of the Decline of Leisure Upon Married Parish Clergy and Their Spouses” (Ph.D.diss., Toronto School of Theology, 1997), 1.

⁹⁰ James Anderson, “Developing A Pattern of Sabbath Rest for Pastors” (Ph.D. diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1991), 1.

ground in the area of leisure and spirituality. The work of Josef Pieper brings forth several important definitions and conceptions related to leisure including the following: “[Leisure is] a mental and spiritual attitude Not simply the result of external factors [such as] spare time, a holiday, a weekend or vacation ... it is ... An attitude of mind, a condition of the soul, and as such utterly contrary to the field of [work].”⁹¹

The work of Pieper and Margaret Kopish undergird the importance of leisure as a spiritual concept. Throughout the course of history, leisure has been an invaluable “gift” to civilization. History chronicles its uses and abuses. Humanity continues to wrestle with its obsession with work as well as with how to properly manage leisure time within society. The research of Jim Spring, Geoffrey Godbey and Alan Graefe, Geoffrey Godbey and John P. Robinson and Alison S. Wellner suggests that society is still pressed for time and leisure time in its purest sense is fast becoming an elusive commodity. As a function of the work-leisure dilemma, burnout among clergy has been addressed. The research efforts of William E. Hume, Howard M. Stanton-Rich and Seppo E. Iso-Ahola, Peeter Vanker and James Anderson all conclude that leisure, inclusive of the spiritual dimension, is critically important to the emotional, physical and spiritual well being of clergypersons. Their findings allow for generalizing that leisure is an important facet of one's daily regimen. Finally, proposals brought forth from research conducted by Robert Stebbins and Susana Junnui suggests that society should return to its original conceptions about leisure and there is an obligation to pursue leisure in obedience to the God and commandment to obey Sabbath.

⁹¹ Josef Pieper, *Leisure the Basis of Culture* (New York: Pantheon, 1952), 52.

Based on the theological evidence brought forward through scripture, the historical evidence related to the importance of work and leisure within civilization and the empirical evidence generated through social science research, one can only conclude that a *work and leisure ethic* is required. In order for society to understand the underpinnings and theological realities that accompany leisure, the ethic must be espoused.

Pursuant to the completion of the review of relevant literature, the researcher now progresses the discussion to the theoretical foundations for the study. In Chapter Three essential terms for the project are defined, and the biblical, theological, historical warrants related to the study are discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

In the previous chapter, efforts were expended to discuss a corpus of literature which would serve as the foundation for this ministry project. This chapter provides a detailed discussion of the theoretical warrants associated with the project. Specifically, the essential terms, biblical, theological and historical warrants are discussed in detail.

Essential Terms

Work

There are numerous definitions of the term work. Definitions cross disciplinary boundaries and at times overlap. For example, in a biblical sense work is defined as the “toil” or labor required to sustain life. Work is the penalty stemming from the sin of Adam in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15). The Hebrew terms *`abad*, meaning “to do work” and *shamar*, translated as “to keep or have charge of, collectively connote that Adam physically worked the soil in the Garden of Eden.¹ Theologian Miroslav Volf discusses the complexities involved with defining work in his seminal book *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work*. Volf states,

¹ _____, Genesis 2:15, *Blue Letter Bible*. 18 December 2005. [bible on-line]; available from, http://www.blueletterbible.org/tmp_dir/words/8/1139859283-2951.html; Internet; accessed 18 December 2005.

A part of the difficulty in defining work lies, certainly, in its ordinariness. Work is one of those things in our daily life “whose meaning is hidden in the mystery of familiarity.” In addition, the character of work is presently undergoing a deep transformation due to technological innovations. The types of work that once dominated the world of work and were immediately associated with the “work” are shrinking to insignificance, and new types of work are rising to prominence.²

Volf’s argument lends itself well to the plethora of definitions that are used to define work.

From the viewpoint of the discipline of psychology, work is often defined as “human behavior that is goal-directed, disciplined, structured by time and task, and requires some combination of physical and mental capabilities.”³ A classical definition of work from the discipline of sociology defines work as “labor used to produce goods and services, which is driven by the spirit of capitalism.” Noted sociologist Max Weber, extrapolated the definition when he further developed the concept of the “Protestant ethic” in the early 1900’s. From the time of Puritans, the “Protestant ethic” was associated with constant, hard work and disassociation from leisure. Work typically is construed as the antithesis of leisure, even in contemporary society. The two terms represent a polarized dichotomy of two important facets of life. As the term is operationalized, then it is essential to define the complimentary term “rest.”

² Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1991), 7

³ Raymond J. Corsini, *The Dictionary of Psychology* (Ann Arbor, MI: Braun-Brumfield, 1999), 1076.

Rest

The term “rest” (Gen. 2:2-3) has a significant meaning in the understanding of God’s action. According to the *New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, the term “rest”, *shabath* is a primitive root which means: “to cease, desist, rest, desist (from labor), to cause to cease, put an end to, to exterminate, destroy, to cause to desist from, to remove, to cause to fail, to keep or observe the Sabbath.”⁴ The verb “rested” in Gen. 2:2 is written, in the most frequently used verb pattern. It expresses the “simple” or “casual” action of the root in the active voice. God paused to rest in Gen. 2:2-3 and then proceeded with the magnificent agenda of Creation. After working six days to create the universe, God took a reprieve from all creative endeavors and rested. With this divine act, God demonstrated that rest is essential for all beings. The solemn observance of this period of holy rest is one that is an indispensable duty of all those to whom God has revealed the holy Sabbath. God sanctified the seventh day, because it was a gift to man for the purposes of rest and replenishment; and most of all, because the Sabbath was a shadow of the rest that we have in Jesus.

There are other significant meanings of the word “rest” in the Old Testament. The term *nuah* is used to denote the following: “to rest; settle down and remain; to repose, have rest, be quiet; to cause to rest, give rest to, make quiet; cause to alight, set down; lay or set down, deposit, let lie, place, to let remain; to leave, depart from, abandon; to obtain rest, be granted rest.”⁵ This term is sometimes used as synonymous with *sabat*,

⁴ James Strong, *The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 112.

⁵ W.E. Vine, et. al. *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985), 203.

which means, “to cease, to rest” (Ex. 20:11), *sabat* for all intents and purposes is to “cease from work” which may imply rest, but not necessarily so. This term also suggests that one is “settled down” or there is an absence of movement. It speaks of the psychological release from the pressures and tensions of life as seen in Isa 28:12.⁶ The Old Testament use of this term permits the believer to know with absolute assurance that God and God alone is the provider of such rest.

Additionally, the Hebrew term *shaqat* is significant as related to the study of the word rest. The term implies tranquility and has the following meanings, “to be quiet, be tranquil, be at peace, be quiet, rest, lie still, be undisturbed; be inactive, to show quietness; to cause quietness, pacify, allay.”⁷ It suggests the total absence of external pressures and inner anxiety.⁸ This type of tranquil rest can only be found when one is in relationship with God.

In the New Testament, there are multiple meanings to the term “rest” that are important to this study. The first term, a noun, *anapausis* implies: (1) an intermission, cessation of any motion, business or labor; and (2) rest, recreation. It is the constant word used in the Septuagint for the Sabbath rest depicted in Matt. 11:29, where the context appears to be relief from religious burdens imposed upon the people by the Pharisees. It is the rest that Jesus promises to all who are willing to take his yoke (Matt. 11:29). What is critical in this passage is that the “rest” of Jesus, is not a “rest” from work, but in work, not the “rest” of inactivity but of harmonious working of all faculties – of the will, heart,

⁶ L.O. Richards, *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1991), 524.

⁷ James Strong, *The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 142.

⁸ Richards, 524.

imagination, conscience – because each has found in God the ideal sphere for its satisfaction and development.⁹

Secondly, the noun *katapausis*, denotes “a causing to cease” or “putting to rest”; in the New Testament, “rest, repose”; it is also used to refer to (a) God’s rest (Acts 7:49; Heb. 3:11, 18; 4:1) and (b) in a general manner, germane to both God and humanity (Heb. 4:10).¹⁰ The term is found nine times in the New Testament.

Closely related is a third term, *anesis* which connotes a comparable type of rest. This type of rest infers: (1) a loosening, relaxing; (2) a more tolerable condition in captivity, to be held in less vigorous confinement; (3) relief, rest, from persecutions. This form of rest comes directly from freedom or from the relaxation of a strenuous burden. The term is also found in Acts 24:23; 2 Cor 2:13; 7:5; 8:13; and 2 Thess 1:7.¹¹

Parallel to the Hebrew term *shabath* is the Greek word *sabbatismos*, which represents the sixth key definition of the word “rest.” This key term is construed as (1) a keeping of the Sabbath; and (2) the blessed rest from struggles, toils and troubles looked for in the age to come by the true worshippers of God and true Christians.¹² This term implies that the Sabbath rest is perpetual and is to be enjoyed in an uninterrupted manner by the believer in fellowship with both the Father and Son. Because this Sabbath “rest” is destined for the future, believers may now enter into it. Regardless of the manner in which the believer enters into it, the foundation is the relationship with God.

⁹ Vine, et. al., 528.

¹⁰ Ibid., 529.

¹¹ Richards, 525.

¹² Vine, et. al., 529.

Fifth, the verb “rest” found in Matt. 11:28 *anapauo* in the active voice suggests “to give intermission from labor, to give rest, to refresh.” The term also may be translated: 1) to cause or permit one to cease from any movement or labor in order to recover and collect his strength 2) to give rest, refresh, to give one's self rest, take rest 3) to keep quiet, of calm and patient expectation.¹³ This “hallowing” of every seventh day was for man’s benefit (Mk. 2:27) and was obviously intended as a permanent institution. This institution is not controlled by the heavenly bodies which mark days, months, seasons and years, but by the physical and spiritual need of men for a weekly day of rest and worship for thankfulness for God’s great gift of salvation. As a direct function of obedience to God’s divine decree to rest, man is required to observe the Sabbath.

Time

Time is an element which is critical to understanding the concepts of Sabbath, rest, Jubilee, work and leisure. It is the pivotal element by which we actively engage in holy leisure or we become violators of God’s commandment to “keep the Sabbath.” Time is the commodity by which we measure our religiosity and spirituality, but is also the commodity which we seek more of. The term generally is associated with duration, an interval of motion, or in some cases the measure of both. The term can be traced back to its Teutonic root denoting “to extend.” Greek and Roman expressions are extracted from Sanskrit roots meaning light and burning.¹⁴

“Time is the context and content of reality, at once the eternal, unchanging

¹³ Ibid., 529.

¹⁴ W.J. Kornfeld, “Time,” *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 14:155.

environment of our being and its momentary, ever-changing mode of expression.”¹⁵

Science and religion pay particular attention to how time is defined. Religion seeks to further connect time by merging together the temporal elements of time and the eternal facet of time. “Starting with the absolute (eternal), religion tries to perceive the particular and relative (the moment and history) in its light. The approach religion takes to time is fundamentally opposite of that of science. In attempting to comprehend all aspects of reality, religion’s path diverges to the extent that it remains aware of the limits of comprehension. It is reality itself, not ideas about reality that the religions want to approach and merge into.”¹⁶

Religious life surges forward beyond thought and comprehension and moves into the realm of doing and being. As Christians we are so immersed in time that difficulties in achieving the distance required for its comprehension immediately arise. In his *Confessions*, Augustine lamented, “What is time? If nobody asks me, I know, but if I want to explain it to someone, then I do not know” (11.14.17)¹⁷ The issues surrounding the understanding of time are never simplistic. Time, can be considered as a measure of change, the principle of duration, the medium of movement and the order of events. Time is the cause of change, duration, movement, and the order of events; it causes all of them.

¹⁵ Barbara C. Sproull, “Sacred Time,” *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: MacMiillan Publishing Company, 1987), 12:535.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 13:536.

Leisure

Leisure is a second essential term that has multiple interdisciplinary meanings. In the biblical context the term is used once and is found in Mark 6:31. The term *eukaireo*, in the Greek translation, is used to connote “opportunity” or “leisure.” There are no psychological or sociological underpinnings assigned to the word.

Leisure, within an appropriate context, infers much more than vacation time, although it surely includes that. Leisure implies much more than self-maintenance time, more than discretionary time and more than simply cluttering periods of idleness with new kinds of busyness. In a sense, leisure is a style of life associated with the idea of freedom – freedom from slavery of all kinds: work, economic security, and achievement. It means freedom from push and rush and run. The meaning of leisure, as used in this study, involves deep identification and association with who and what and how we go about our lives, within society. Leisure is a time, a place, a circumstance, an opportunity, a method and a desire to gain perspective on life and what it is all about. Leisure is the absence of pressure and compulsion with all their frenzied activity and busyness. Leisure is freedom to enjoy the abundance of all that God makes available to us. Leisure is freedom to be who we are, loving God and others in response to his love for us.

Leisure in its most rudimentary form implies the idea of ceasing from work and being free from obligation. With this context, it is possible to define leisure in a variety of complimentary ways. The minimal requirement is that leisure is free time. On a higher level, leisure is a quality of life, a state of soul or well-being. Leisure has been a subject of neglect in the Christian church. Books and sermons abound on work, but not on leisure. The church has historically condemned leisure as worldly and unworthy of

spiritual minded persons, or has tied leisure to the hedonistic practices of a secular society.

The definitions for the term leisure are manifold. As with the concept of work, definitions and articulations of the terms cross disciplines. To begin, in a biblical sense, leisure can be defined as a “period of rest which is grounded in the concept of obedience to the keeping the Sabbath.” (Gen 2:1-3) It infers freedom from labor as we see in Genesis 2:1-3 when God stopped to rest after laboring six days to bring about creation. It may also be defined as “freedom from burdens and overbearing concerns” as Jesus implied in Matthew 11:28-29. Leisure in a theological sense, can also be defined as a period of “rest, refreshment and rejuvenation for the body and spirit” as noted in Mark 6:32-34. Professor Bertha Cato of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism at the University of Florida defines this form of leisure as “Jesus’ Rest” in her article, *Leisure and Jesus’ Rest: Making the Connection*.¹⁸

Other definitions that are commonly used to describe the term leisure, include residual, activity-related, work-related, and psychological definitions. There is some degree of overlap within the pool of definitions. For example, “residual” definitions view leisure as what one does in the time left after all of the required maintenance functions for daily living have been taken care of. According to these definitions leisure and leisure activities are issued a relatively low priority in the daily regimen of the individual.”¹⁹

¹⁸ Bertha M. Cato, “Leisure and Jesus’ Rest: Making the Connection,” *University Leadership Magazine*, 1, 1998, [journal on-line]; available from www.leadersu.com/theology/leisure-rest.html; Internet; accessed 3 October 2004.

¹⁹ Raymond J. Corsini, *The Encyclopedia of Psychology*, 2d ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1994), 333.

At its simplest level, leisure is usually thought of as time free of work commitment. A relating meaning is that it is an attitude or state of being that is relaxed and free of care or obligation. The German philosopher, Josef Pieper, described leisure as: “a mental and spiritual attitude ... not simply the result of external factors [such as] spare time, a holiday, a week-end or vacation ... it is ... an attitude of mind, a condition of the soul, and as such utterly contrary to the field of [work].”²⁰ It is usually inferred that leisure pursuits were relaxed and not tremendously demanding; Rom Harre’ suggests that they “should be unhurried, idle, unstructured, perhaps even a mode of resting. They are thus defined in contrast to frantic, busy, structured, demanding activities in which time appears as some kind of discipline.”²¹ Richard Kraus suggests that several contemporary authors have developed a variety of perspectives through which to understand and analyze leisure, including “humanistic,” “epistemological,” “existential,” and “political models.”²² For the purposes of this study, three of the most useful perspectives presented by Kraus are used to lead toward a composite definition of the term.

Leisure As Discretionary Time

The most common understanding of leisure today is that it consists of time free from work or work related responsibilities. Typically, when the workweek is shortened or when holidays or vacations are added, economists conclude that employees have gained leisure. Other tasks required for self-maintenance, such as eating, sleeping and personal

²⁰ Josef Pieper, *Leisure the Basis of Culture* (New York: Pantheon, 1952), 52.

²¹ Rom Harre, “Leisure and Its Varieties,” *Leisure Studies* 9 (1990): 187.

²² Richard G. Kraus, *Leisure In A Changing America: Multicultural Perspectives* (New York: McMillan College Publishing Company, 1994), 9.

care, are also regarded as obligatory time, thus are not considered to be forms of leisure.

The French sociologist Joffre Dumadzier described leisure as time spent apart from the obligations of work, family, and society.²³

Leisure As Free-Time Activity

An alternative view is that leisure is more than discretionary time; instead it is frequently considered to be the activities we engage in voluntarily during such periods of time. Leisure activities range from games to hobbies to sports, and can be active or passive in nature. They may also include volunteer experiences, community service, education which is unrelated to career and religious involvement. Some social critics argue that, most activities are trivial and unworthy of the term leisure. Sebastian de Grazia concluded that the inclination of most modern Americans to fill their free hours with hobbies, community tasks, personal chores and other light forms of amusement meant that they had no real leisure, in the classical sense.²⁴ In spite of the merit associated with the positive, active engagement of productive leisure time pursuits, many warn that we should be on guard against their negative use. The writer C.S. Lewis in *Christianity and Culture* brings forth such a warning. Lewis states, “our leisure, even our play, is a matter of serious concern. There is not neutral ground in the universe: every square inch, every split second, is claimed by God and counterclaimed by Satan.”²⁵

²³ Ibid.,10.

²⁴ Sebastian deGrazia, *Of Time, Work, and Leisure*. New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1952.

²⁵ C.S. Lewis, *Christian Reflections* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), p. 33.

The warning is to guard against idleness, and to monitor the forms of leisure activities that people engage in.

Leisure As Personal Experience and State of Being

Lastly, leisure is often construed as a personal experience and “state of being.” The same activity may or may not constitute a form of leisure involvement, depending on the reasons for engaging in it and the circumstances under which it is enjoyed. An activity pursued primarily for gain—monetary or otherwise—is not usually considered leisure. Beyond this, leisure motivations may be listed by the dozen, including the need to achieve varied forms of emotional satisfaction—to gain a sense of accomplishment, pleasure, release escape, self-discovery, excitement, mastery or challenge.

In recently years, social psychologists have identified two basic characteristics of the leisure experience: (1) it must involve personal freedom in selecting activities without compulsion or hope for extrinsic rewards; and (2) it has the potential to involve all aspects of the individual’s personality and, to become “self-actualized” as a human being.²⁶

For the purposes of this research endeavor, leisure is defined as “an activity apart from the obligations of work, family, and society to which the individual turns at will, for either relaxation, diversion, or broadening knowledge.”²⁷

²⁶ Richard G. Kraus, *Leisure In A Changing America: Multicultural Perspectives* (New York: McMillan College Publishing Company, 1994), 10.

²⁷ Leland Ryken, *Work and Leisure in Christian Perspective*, 30.

Leisure Counseling

There are multiple definitions of leisure counseling, with no one definition being used predominately in the literature or professional practice. Larry C. Loesch and Paul T. Wheeler in *Principles of Leisure Counseling*, provide a series of definitions which have different intents. The first definition is provided by C.F. McDowell who defines leisure counseling as, "... a helping process which facilitates interpretive, affective and/or behavioral changes in others toward attainment of their leisure well-being."²⁸ This definition is notable in its effort at comprehensiveness. That is, the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of human functioning are alluded to.

A second definition is offered by Shank and Kennedy who examined all of the literature related to leisure counseling and constructed the following definition: "Leisure counseling involves a careful examination of a person's background, beliefs, values, and attitudes and becomes education process as well as a remedial counseling service."²⁹

A final, more theologically-based definition was developed by the researcher, utilizing Shank and Kennedy's definition as a point of departure. For the purpose of this study a definition, grounded in theology was needed. The definition reads in this manner:

Leisure counseling involves a careful examination of a person's faith, understanding of biblical terms such as work, rest, Sabbath, leisure and the subsequent beliefs, values, and attitudes pertaining to each term. The role of the pastor, lay counselor, Christian educator becomes developing an educational process as well as a counseling service which has empowerment and transformation as its goals.

²⁸ Larry C. Loesch and Paul T. Wheeler, *Principles of Leisure Counseling* (Minneapolis: Educational Media Corp., 1982), 66.

²⁹ Ibid., 69.

This definition is more suited to directing leisure counseling efforts which are focused and results oriented.

Having defined the essential terms pertinent to the ministry project, the biblical, theological and historical warrants are discussed. The following section addresses the biblical warrants related to the project.

Biblical Warrants

There are several passages of scripture that serve as the biblical foundation of this topic and subsequent project. The following scriptures have served to guide my ministry, understanding of the subject matter and the manner in which the researcher provides care to parishioners. By no stretch of the imagination is this section all inclusive, but select passages are utilized to lay the groundwork for this section and the theological and historical sections to follow. Lastly, multiple translations of the Bible are utilized for the purpose of adding clarity to the discussion throughout this section of the chapter.

Genesis 1-2

The “Granville Sharpe Rule” suggests that the proper interpretation of a passage of scripture or a word in passage can be found in its first occurrence. It is relevant to the subject matter to first examine work as it appears in scripture. The first occurrence of “work” is found in the Book of Genesis, specifically in the “Creation Narrative” found in chapters 1-2. Moses is given credit for penning the Book of Genesis, where the creative endeavors of God are chronicled in the early chapters. There first two chapters are important to the plight of humankind because we see God at labor. In light of the fact that

we are created in the image of God or *Imago Dei* (Gen 1:26-27), then it is reasonable to expect that God's creation will imitate what God does. The follow passage illustrates God's creative power at work: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. (Gen 1:1-2, KJV)

This text provides a first hand view of God at work. God, as Spirit, does what will later be assigned to humanity-- create and have dominion over that which is created (Gen 1:26). In Genesis 2:15 (NRSV), the biblical writer shows God's intent for humankind relative to work. The biblical writer wrote: "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it." Adam, the first man was employed by the Creator to labor body and spirit to care for God's creation. Matthew Henry provides important commentary to this passage of scripture when he wrote the following:

... God appointed him to dress the garden and to keep it. Paradise itself was not a place from exemption from work. We were none of us sent into the world to be idle. He that made us these souls and bodies has given us something to work with; He that gave us being has given us business, to serve Him and our generation, and to work out our salvation. Secular employments will very well consist with a state of innocency and life of communion with God ... There is a true pleasure in the business which God calls us to an employs us in.³⁰

God requires people to work on this side of heaven, but as we labor, we must also engage in rest to restore the body, mind, spirit, and soul.

³⁰ Matthew Henry, *Study Bible*, King James Version (Dallas: World Bible Publishers, Inc., 1994), 7.

Genesis 2:1-3

One of the hallmarks of Gods' creative activity illustrated in Genesis 1:1-31, was after six days of labor, on the seventh day, the Creator paused to rest. Genesis 2:1-3 (NRSV) provides the biblical evidence of the cessation of work by God:

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

It must be noted that God, who is eternal (Deut. 33:27) and does not grow weary (Ps. 121:3), rested because of pleasure gained from all recorded creative endeavors. In the case of human creation, rest is a prerequisite for both body and spirit (1 Cor. 3:16-17) to continue onward with labor. The inherent message to humanity is that work is God-ordained, but rest both body, mind, and spirit are also mandated by God. To understand the theological and practical basis of leisure and leisure counseling as pastoral care, one must begin with the concept of rest. Rest, for all intents and purposes, is the antithesis of work.

Renowned Rabbi and author Harold S. Kushner in his book *The Lord is My Shepherd: Healing Wisdom of the Twenty Third Psalm* provides a stimulating discussion on the need for rest as a means of "restoring the soul." Kushner utilizes the timeless 23rd Psalm to push the reader to realize that a life of busyness is antithetical to the rest that God has promised and provided for humanity. Kushner states, "We too can be too busy taking care of things that we neglect our souls. The world asks so much of us. We give ourselves so totally to our work, to the task of raising a family and running a home, to volunteer commitments that we often forget to take time to nourish our souls, forgetting

that we need to rely upon the wisdom of the soul to guide our working and living hours.”³¹ A cessation of activity to rest is paramount to having a life which is balanced. Rest is the cornerstone of Sabbath.

Exodus 20:8-11

The manifestation of obedience to the will of God for humankind is taking the time to rest and observe a Sabbath. In the Judeo-Christian tradition Sabbath is observed in a variety of ways. What is of paramount importance is to understand the biblical basis for the observance as noted in the following passages of scripture:

Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it. (Ex 20:8-11, NRSV)

Observance of the Sabbath is for many the point of departure for understanding the constructive use of leisure within Judeo-Christian religion. It establishes the baseline from which we develop an ethic of both work and leisure. The term is derived from the Hebrew word *shabbath*, which calls for cessation or rest. In both Greek (*Sabbaton*) and Latin (*Sabbatum*) the term has similar meanings.

Sabbath in the Old Testament

The Sabbath was a day of rest “sanctified to the Lord” (Gen 2:1-3; Ex 16:23; 31:15; Deut 5:14). All work was forbidden, the prohibition including strangers as well as

³¹ Harold S. Kushner, *The Lord is My Shepherd: Healing Wisdom of the Twenty Third Psalm* (New York: Anchor, 2003), 60-61.

Israelites, beasts as well as men (Ex. 20:8-10; 31:13-17; Deut. 5:12-14). The following particular actions are mentioned as forbidden: cooking (Ex. 16:23); gathering manna (Ex. 16:26); plowing and reaping (Ex. 34:21); lighting a fire for cooking (Ex. 35:3); gathering wood (Num. 15:32); carrying burdens (Jer 17:21-22); pressing grapes, bringing in sheaves, and loading animals (II Esd 13:15); trading (II Esd 13:15). Traveling, at least with a religious object, was not forbidden, the prohibition of Exodus 16:29, referring only to leaving the camp to gather food; it is implied in the institution of holy assemblies (Lev. 23:2-3), and was customary in the time of the kings (2 Kings 4:23). At a later period, however, all movement was restricted to a distance of 2000 cubits (between five and six furlongs), or a “Sabbath day's journey” (Acts 1:12).³²

Total abstention from work was prescribed only for the Sabbath and the Day of Atonement; on the other feast-days servile work alone was prohibited (Ex. 12:16; Lev. 23:7). Willful violation of the Sabbath was punished with death (Ex. 31:14-15; Num. 15:32-36). The prohibition of work made it necessary to prepare food, and whatever might be needed, the day before the Sabbath, hence known as the day of preparation, or *parasceve* (*paraskeue*; Matt. 27:62; Mark, 15:42).

Besides abstention from work, special religious observances were prescribed. (a) The daily sacrifices were doubled, that is two lambs of a year old without blemish were offered up in the morning, and two in the evening, with twice the usual quantity of flour tempered with oil and of the wine of libation (Num 27:3-10). (b) new loaves of proposition were placed before the Lord (Lev 24:5). (c) A sacred assembly was to be held in the sanctuary for solemn worship (Lev 23:2-3). We have no details as to what was

³² Louis Jacobs, “Shabbat,” *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. Vol. 13. (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1987), 189-190.

done by those living at a distance from the sanctuary. Temple worship belongs to the post-Exilic period; still it is probably a development of an old custom. In earlier days the people were wont to go to hear the instructions of the Prophets (2 Kings 4:23), and it is not unlikely that meetings for edification and prayer were common from the oldest times.

Sabbath in the New Testament

Christ, while observing the Sabbath, set Himself in word and act against this absurd rigorism which made man a slave of the day. He reproved the scribes and Pharisees for putting an intolerable burden on men's shoulders (Matt. 23:4), and proclaimed the principle that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27). He cured on the Sabbath, and defended His disciples for plucking ears of corn on that day. In His arguments with the Pharisees on this account, He showed that the Sabbath is not broken in cases of necessity or by acts of charity (Matt 12:3; Mk 2:25; Lk 6:3; 16:5). The apostle Paul enumerates the Sabbath among the Jewish observances which are not obligatory on Christians (Col 2:16; Gal 4:9-10; Rom 14:5). The Gentile converts held their religious meetings on Sunday (Acts 10:7; 1 Cor 16:2) and with the disappearance of the Jewish Christian churches this day was exclusively observed as the Lord's Day.

Jubilee

Related to the concepts of rest, Sabbath and leisure is the important concept of Jubilee. The true intent of the concept of Jubilee itself calls for a period of rest, relief and restoration on a variety of levels. Jubilee is a period of rest from the labors of life which

include relief from debt, working of the land and freedom from that which enslaves human kind.

Biblical Jubilee

In ancient Israel, the Year of Jubilee was the name given to the fiftieth year, a year heralded with the blast of a trumpet. It was a year to be hallowed, a year when liberty and release from debt was proclaimed throughout the land. In this year all slaves were set free. All debts of the poor were cancelled. Those who had been depressed into poverty for any reason were commanded to return home to their family and repossess their inheritance. It was a year of new beginnings, an economic recovery for everyone in the land.

The word “jubilee” comes from the Hebrew word *yobel*, the ram's horn trumpet which was blown to inaugurate the year. Yobel became associated with the Latin term *jubilum* (from jubilaire, to rejoice, to exult) and so entered our English language as “jubilee.” Since that time Jubilee has been associated with joy and gladness. The most common use of the term is for a public celebration, usually occurring every 50th year, the “Golden Jubilee.”

The Jubilee celebration is an integral part of the Biblical “festivals of the Lord.” The frequency of these festivals is based on the number “7.” Every seventh day is the Sabbath. There are seven feasts in the year, and the seventh month is the sacred month. A system of sacred years is also based on the number seven. Just as every seventh day is a Sabbath, every seventh year is a sabbatical year. After a multiplication of seven times seven years (49 years) comes the Jubilee on the 50th year. The 7th day = the Sabbath, the

7th year = the sabbatical year the 50th day $(7 \times 7)+1$ = the day of Pentecost the 50th year
 $(7 \times 7)+1$ = the year of Jubilee.

The Significance of Jubilee

Two kinds of trumpets were blown in the temple on New Year's Day: the straight silver trumpet, and the ram's horn trumpet, the yobel (now called the shofar). Some Rabbis stated that in the Year of Jubilee, the shofar was to be sounded by every individual, even on the Sabbath. So outside the temple, anyone, even a child, could go around blowing a trumpet. Maimonides, a Rabbi of the 12th century, considered that the purpose of the Feast of Trumpets was to awaken people from their spiritual slumber, to prepare for the solemn Day of Atonement which followed ten days later. It was on this Day of Atonement that the actual release of slaves and cancellation of debt took place, although the Jubilee began on the first day of the year.

There was a spiritual significance to canceling debt and freeing slaves on the Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement was the one day in the year when the High Priest entered the "Holy of Holies" to make atonement for the sins of the people. Those who had lost their liberty or property were to have them restored on the same day that God forgave the debts of his people and restored them to fellowship with himself. Not only were the people and their animals given a rest from work in the sabbatical and Jubilee years, but the land itself was to be left fallow, given a rest from being worked:

When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a Sabbath ... Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in the fruits thereof but in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land ... You shall neither sow your field nor reap your vineyard.. for it is a year of rest unto the land. And you shall number seven Sabbaths of years unto you, seven times seven years ... and you shall hallow the fiftieth year... a jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you, you shall not sow, neither reap. (Lev 25:2-5, 8, 10, 11)

During the Sabbatical and Jubilee years, any crop left in the fields was not to be harvested for the landowner, but to be given to the poor. (Ex 23:11).

The Release of Debts

The laws of Moses specify that debts were to be valid for only seven years. If debtors were unable to complete payment in that time, their debts were to be released. rich creditors. “The law of debt release” is commanded in Deuteronomy 15:1-5 (NRSV):

Every seventh year you shall grant a remission of debts. And this is the manner of the remission: every creditor shall remit the claim that is held against a neighbor, not exacting it of a neighbor who is a member of the community, because the Lord's remission has been proclaimed. Of a foreigner you may exact it, but you must remit your claim on whatever any member of your community owes you. There will, however, be no one in need among you, because the Lord is sure to bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a possession to occupy, if only you will obey the Lord your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today.

The Jubilee was a multiplication of the law of individual debt cancellation: after 49 years (7 times 7) all the debt in the country was cancelled at once. The Jubilee took care of any individual debts that disobedient creditors had not cancelled after seven years, by wiping out all debt, regardless of when it had been incurred. The Jubilee debt cancellation was a public, general law affecting everyone. The stated intent of this legislation was to abolish

poverty: There shall be no poor among you. Debt would not be allowed to accumulate forever, but would be periodically abolished for the people's sake, so that they would prosper in the land.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11; 18

Time is a vital biblical concept that is embraced. Time from a biblical concept is utilized from both temporal and eternal perspectives. Time is utilized to give meaning to many of the points along our Christian journey. Solomon, the writer of Ecclesiastes (Qouheloth), purveys the wisdom of time in the following passage:

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. What gain have the workers from their toil? have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. (Eccl 3:1-11, NRSV)

Humanity is reminded by this passage that time is ordered and over the course of one's life operating within *kairos*, or "God's time" is more important than being driven by *chronos*, time as defined by man and tools used to track time. The aforementioned passage reminds humanity of the swiftness of life and the responsibility to take time to enjoy the moments in time which are God-given.

Ephesians 5:16

The apostle Paul in his letter to the church at Ephesus makes a statement about time that perhaps drives our contemporary insatiable desire to capture and use “productively” every moment recorded by the clock. While pointing the church toward problems with persecution, Paul advises his congregation to get as much done while possible toward building the kingdom, saying “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Eph 5:16, NKJV). Eugene Peterson author of an alternative translation of the Bible, *The Message* states the same passage in the following manner, “Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times!” (Eph 5:16, *The Message*)

Time, unfortunately, has been made the deciding factor in our directives from the Creator to work, rest, observe the Sabbath and partake in leisure. Our inherent problem as Christians is the lack of understanding relative to the role of time in our lives, its use and misuse, stewardship, and the insatiable urge to force as many activities into a designated window of time as possible, commonly known as “time deepening.” If believers genuinely trust that God is a God of supply (Phil 4:19), then the provision of ample amounts of time to accomplish all that God has in store for our lives is but a small task for God.

Mark 6:30-33

The key passage of scripture which addresses the concept of leisure best suited for this project is Mark 6:31-33 which states,

And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately. And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him. (KJV)

Marks' version of the gospel was the written first, between A.D. 55 and 65. John Mark is credited with authorship even though he was not one of the disciples but accompanied Paul on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:13). Contemporary theologians note the primary source of Mark's writings were oral and perhaps written accounts from Peter. The purpose of this fast paced, action oriented gospel is to present the person, work, and teachings of Jesus. Mark's audience was Christians residing in Rome during the reign of Tiberius Caesar. The Empire with its common language and excellent transportation and communications systems was fertile to hear Jesus' message which spread quickly from nation to nation.

The context of Mark 6:30-33 is Jesus teaching the Twelve about the critical aspects of servanthood and discipleship. The vital lesson to be learned from this teaching of Jesus is importance of balancing the work of building the Kingdom of God and the need for leisure. One critical word to the text and its value to the foundation of the project is *eukaria* which denotes an "opportunity" or "favorable occasion." The word also is used to denote one being in a position to "take advantage of the element of time as providing an opportunity; to have opportunity (Mk 6:31; 1 Cor 16:12); to have leisure for us to spend one's time in anything (Acts 17:21)."³³

The dual problems of the need for leisure and lack of leisure ring clarion clear in the gospel recorded by Mark. The pericope contained in Mark 6:30-44 points our

³³ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Iowa Falls: World Publishing, 1992), 674.

attention, for the first time, to Jesus directly addressing the problem of leisure with the Twelve. The Twelve returning from their missionary journey, very excitedly and hurriedly begin to tell Jesus all that transpired during their travels. The pace at which they report is consistent with the Markan style of writing and is rapid. The overarching theme in this text is Mark's dual concern of discipleship development within the small band of disciples and within the broader community. The substantive reporting illustrated in 6:11-12 and then again in verse 30 is meaningful to the band of disciples and Jesus, but Mark labors to divert the reader to a more pressing issue, the problem of work versus leisure. Mark forces the reader to personally and corporately come to terms with the need for balance in our daily living and service to the Kingdom of God.

Jesus, ceasing the opportunity for a "teaching moment," tones the diatribe downward and commands that the Twelve go to a quiet place for a period of rest, recreation and restoration of both body and spirit. As Bonnie Bowman Thurston notes in *Preaching Mark*, Jesus recognized the daily pressures of ministry (v.31b), and that the Twelve must be weary from their travel and intense public activity. "Jesus invites the disciples to 'come away privately' or 'alone' (*kat idian*, thus highlighting Mark's tendency to separate 'disciples' from the 'crowd', cf. 1:35; 3:9-10, 20) and 'rest'."³⁴ The consecration of time, rest, and recreation are exclusive to Mark's version of the gospel. With a boat as the mode of travel Jesus and the Twelve attempt to withdraw to a "deserted place" (*eremon*, "lonely" or uninhabited place", introducing the reference to desert spirituality; cf. 1:4, 12, 35)."³⁵

³⁴ Bonnie Bowman Thurston, *Preaching Mark* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 77.

³⁵ Ibid.

But of greater import in the pericope is verse 37 in which the Twelve react akin to those who are overworked, without sufficient physical, mental and spiritual rest, and had no “opportunity for leisure” (*eukairoun*). They gently lodge the complaint with Jesus, almost in an irritated manner, that they had finally arrived in a quiet place, away from the crowd, and now the better part of the day was spent (vs. 35). Despite their response to Jesus, the Teacher encourages the disciples to continue serving the people. The critical point issue weighing carefully the moral and spiritual obligation to service versus the need for self-care in the form of restorative leisure.

Scottish biblical interpreter William Barclay provides additional commentary on Mark 6:30-34 which is germane to the topic of leisure. In his commentary entitled *The Gospel of Mark*, Barclay introduces a concept which he labels the “rhythm of life.” The precursor to his comment is that the disciples return from their mission trip and report to Jesus all which they had accomplished. “The demanding crowds were so insistent upon having their needs met that the Twelve had no time to eat; so Jesus told them to come with him to a lonely place on the other side of the lake that they might have peace and rest for a little time.”³⁶ Barclay proceeds to surmise that: “the Christian life is a continuous going into the presence of God from the presence of men and coming out into the presence of men into the presence of God. It is like the rhythm of sleep and work. We cannot work unless we have our time of rest; and sleep will not come unless we have worked until we are tired.”³⁷ Barclay expounds upon a critical danger relative leisure. Speaking on the dangers in life relating to the improper use of leisure, Barclay states:

³⁶ William Barclay, *The Gospel of Mark* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975), 155.

³⁷ Ibid.

There are two dangers in life. First there is the danger of too constant activity. No man can work without rest; and no man can live the Christian life unless he gives himself times with God. It may well be that the whole trouble in our lives is that we give God no opportunity to speak to us, because we do not know how to be still and to listen; we give God no time to recharge us with spiritual energy and strength, because there is not time when we wait upon him. How can we shoulder life's burdens if we have no contact with him who is Lord of all good life? How can we do God's work unless in God's strength unless we seek quietness and in loneliness the presence of God?

Second, there is the danger of too much withdrawal. Devotion that does not issue into action is not real devotion. Prayer that does not issue into work is not real prayer. We must never seek the fellowship of God in order to avoid the fellowship of men but in order to fit ourselves better for it. The rhythm of the Christian life is the alternate meeting of God in the secret place and serving men in the market place.”³⁸

All of the Gospel writers record instances where Jesus “departed” from the disciples and the crowds to be alone. Of particular importance is Jesus’ example of withdrawing into the solitude of “holy leisure” to pray, reflect and restore His spirit (Mt 14:23; Mk 4:10; Lk 9:19; 9:36; 6:15). The tension in each of the aforementioned examples lies in Jesus separating himself from others, into a state of leisure for a divine purpose, as opposed to continuing in a pattern of conflict and work. There is much to be gained from this example.

A final important lesson to be acquired from the aforementioned text is self-care. It is important to be compassionate and give the required spiritual guidance relative to work, rest, Sabbath, time and leisure to keep those in our charge from fainting. But it is also of paramount importance for the caregiver to understand, internalize and practice the true intent of each of the aforementioned biblical concepts.

³⁸ Ibid.

Ezekiel 34:11-12

There are several wonderful passages of scripture that speak to the fundamental tasks of the pastoral counselor/caregiver to address the needs of the people in his or her charge. There are three that are important in establishing this portion of the biblical foundation for this project Ezekiel 34:11-12, Matthew 9:35-38;10:1), and Mark 6:34-35.

The prophet Ezekiel, son of Buzi, a Zadokite priest is given credit for authorship of this book. The book was written circa 571 to announce God's judgment on Israel and other nations and to foretell the eventual salvation of Israel. One of the great themes of the book is the prophet's indictment of the spiritual leaders of the nation, particularly those that were pastors. Chapters 33-48 present the message of hope to the nation, that God has not forsaken them and eventually restoration will come about. In chapter 34, the following verses underscore the work of God as the Divine Caregiver and Pastor:

For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. (Ezek 34:11-12, NRSV)

The text infers that Israel is God's flock and is truly pastored by the Creator. The metaphor of a scattered flock is utilized to illustrate the separation and fragmentation of the people of God both physically (in light of their captivity in Babylon) and spiritually. The promise to the nation is that God will find all of the lost sheep (people) and bring them out of the physical and spiritual places they have wandered. The Hebrew term *baquas* (34:12) is used to denote "the act of seeking something that is lost or missing, or at least, whose location is unknown."³⁹ The who is actively seeking those that have

³⁹ W.E. Vine, et. al., 230.

wandered off the plain path is the Shepherd. The Hebrew term *roeh* appears sixty-two times in the Old Testament is used in the text as a direct reference to God who is the “Great Shepherd,” who pastures or feeds the sheep.”⁴⁰

Relative to this project, because of our lack of understand about work, rest, Sabbath, time and leisure, we find ourselves in places that are unfamiliar and painful. The task of the pastor is to raise the level of understanding of congregants to lead them out of the dark desolate places (e.g.-poor stewardship of time, our physical bodies, overwork and lack of leisure). In this passage, God promises to take cover as shepherd of his scattered flock. When pastors and/or Christian educators fail to provide congregants with the requisite teaching on key biblical principles, we must not despair but remember that God is in control and there is a direct promise that the Creator will one day return and care for the flock. Thus we have a direct source of help that we can turn to in troubled times, even when our lives are out of balance. Our source has the wherewithal to transform any dark, dismal situation into a one that works out for our good (Rom 8:28).

Matthew 9:35-38; 10:1

In the New Testament, a passage similar to Ezekiel 34:11-12, underscores the importance of the pastor or caregiver in making prudent effort to gather in those that are both physically and spiritually lost. In Matthew’s version of the Gospel, Jesus encounters a crowd at Capernaum which is scattered and fainting from the perils of pitfalls of life and the religious rigor of the day. Matthew records the following:

⁴⁰ Ibid., 228.

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest. And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. (Mt 9:35-38; 10:1, KJV)

Kata Matthian, the Gospel as recorded by St. Matthew was written A.D. 60-65 to primarily a Jewish audience for the sole purpose of proving that Jesus is the Messiah, the Eternal King. In Matthew 9:36 there are two key words that provide the basis for counseling and caregiving, compassion and fainted. In the New Testament the verb *splanchnizomai* is used to define the state of “being moved from one’s inwards.”⁴¹ It is commonly correlated with the terms pity and tenderness. The noun used for compassion, *splanchna* is derived from the aforementioned verb. This state is indicative of having a “heart-felt” sense of relating to a condition that one views. Jesus looked upon this crowd, and was able to physically see both their physical and spiritual suffering and exhaustion. The love felt by Jesus moved the Savior to respond to the need of the people.

Also in the same verse is the term *eskulmenoi*, which is used to convey that the people were “distressed, harassed, worried, and troubled.”⁴² The term also suggests that the people were “bewildered, importuned by those who should have taught them.” The reference is to the Jewish leaders of the day, namely the Pharisees and the Scribes. Additionally, in the same verse lies the term *errehmennoi* which connotes “the cast down

⁴¹ Ibid., 218.

⁴² Cleon, L. Rogers, Jr. and Cleon L. Rogers, III. *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 21.

state of the people, mishandled and lying helpless from the stress created by a lack of leadership.”⁴³ What is vitally important that must be gleaned from this text is that caregivers must feel and understand the plight of the people who are weary from poor leadership and the rigors of living in a legalistic manner. The aim of pastoral care should be to liberate and not enslave. As issues surrounding the biblical topics of work, rest, Sabbath, time and leisure, manifest themselves within the individual lives of “sheep” and the body, compassionate liberation must ensue. This liberation can take the form of biblically and theologically sound teaching, which leads to orthopraxy.

The aforementioned passages of scripture serve to build the biblical foundation for the ministry model and subsequent research. Each passage helps to inform the theological foundation of the project. The next section addresses the theological warrants related to the project. Attention is given to key constructs and methods that buttress the rationale for the project.

Having identified the biblical or scriptural warrants that theologically undergird the project, the theological warrants, inclusive of key constructs and methods are addressed in the section presented below.

Theological Warrants

As the discussion of the theological warrants related to the study ensues, it is necessary to begin with the key theological constructs that inform the warrants. God, Jesus, sin, compassion, redemption, and the abundant life are all constructs which undergird the theological warrants.

⁴³ Ibid.

Theological Constructs

God

All discussion related to this endeavor must begin with God, for God is the Creator of all (Gen 1:1) and the giver of every good and perfect gift (Jm 1:17). The span of God's benevolence includes the gifts includes work, Sabbath, time, leisure and counseling/caregiving. Humanity has the great privilege of being made in the divine image of God (Gen 1:26; *imago Dei*). Withstanding our genesis, we have the capacity to both enjoin God in creative acts of work and play, but also to imitate the actions of God (*imitatio Dei*) when we consider the matters of rest and Sabbath. The "Preacher" Solomon in Ecclesiastes 3:12 (NKJV) assures us that God genuinely does sanction the godly use of leisure, for the writer declares, "I know nothing that is better for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives, and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of his labor—it is the gift of God." God wants us to enjoy life.

Owen C. Thomas in his chapter on the doctrine of God, in *Introduction to Theology* further documents the importance of God as point of departure in all theological discourse, Thomas states:

For the Gospel is that God is for us in the way manifest in Christ. God's outward action, toward his creatures, is anchored in his 'nature', i.e., it is a manifestation of his proper truth, it is his eternal will and not his passing fancy ... The identity between the revelation and the Revealer, between 'God for us' and "God in himself," is the nerve center of all confessing statements.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Owen C. Thomas, *Introduction to Theology* (Harrisburg: Morehouse, 1983), 78.

Thomas further posits, “God is transcendent, holy, mysterious, absolute, infinite, self-existent, in complete independence of the creation; and God is creator, judge, redeemer, merciful, and related to creation.”⁴⁵

Andrew Purves in his book *Reconstructing Pastoral Theology: A Christological Approach* addresses the issue of the mission of God (*missio Dei*). Purves argues that part of the mission of God is revelation to the people of God. Based on Purves’ argument, it is inherently possible that the revelation of God can manifest in our work, rest, and leisure. Purves further notes that, “according to Christian faith the ministry of Jesus Christ is the direct act of God: ‘I do as the Father has commanded me’ (Jn 14:31).” It is through Christ and his actions on earth that the revelation of God is manifest.⁴⁶ As Jesus worked, rested, kept a Sabbath, remained sensitive to his time of earth, laughed, attended festive weddings, and sought solitude, God’s intent for humanity relative to work, rest, Sabbath, time and leisure were revealed.

In light of our Adamic nature (Gen 3ff; Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 5:12), it is assured that all humanity will fall short of imitating and obeying God (Rom 3:23) relative to stewardship of work, rest, Sabbath, time and leisure. It is the ministry of God that provides reconciliation through Jesus Christ when we fail to be wise stewards of the previously mentioned blessings. Langdon Gilkey in *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Tradition and Tasks* summarizes the importance of God as the initiator of new possibilities when speaking of work, Sabbath, time and leisure in our lives. Gilkey states the following:

⁴⁵ Ibid., 79

⁴⁶ Andrew H. Purves, *Reconstructing Pastoral Theology: A Christological Foundation* (Louisville: WJK Press, 2004), 22-23.

Finally, God is experienced as the source or ground of new possibility and of the impingement of the future on the present. These novel possibilities are not produced out of the past, out of preceding actuality—else they could not embody the genuinely new. Nor are they produced by creatures or set of creatures in the present—else there would be no subsequent order among the near infinity of present creatures. Rather, they are “held” in the envisionment of some unconditional reality that spans past, present, and future and that views these possibilities as possible, as “not yet” and still as relevant to and in harmony with past and present actualities.⁴⁷

In essence, all of humanity’s possibilities for the wise stewardship and enjoyment of work, rest, Sabbath, time, and leisure start and end with God. Believers can learn wise stewardship from examining the life of Jesus.

Jesus

It is the incarnate Christ that reveals to us God’s desire for humanity in regard to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. John 1:14 (NKJV) reminds us that “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” It is through the manifestation of the logos that we are able to model our attitudes and behaviors about work, rest, Sabbath, time, and leisure. In Jesus we see the genesis of leisure counseling (Mk 6:30-31). In Jesus we see divinity and yet full humanity. The Gospels provide vivid portraits of Jesus at work (Jn 14:31), the Christ that desires rest from labor (Mk 6:30-31), observing the Sabbath (Mk 2:23), in full cognizance of time (Lk 9:51), and at leisure (Jn 2:1). Each example serves as an illustration of how we are to live life.

To adequately understand the work of Christ, the person of Christ must be reckoned with. It is imperative that the doctrine of Christ be treated in the same manner

⁴⁷Langdon Gilkey, “God” in *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks*, Peter C. Hodgson & Robert H. King, eds. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 110.

as the doctrine of God. A segmented examination of either doctrine minimizes the full Godhead. To further argue the aforementioned point, Owen Thomas in *Introduction to Theology* states,

Christology or the doctrine of Christ is not simply one topic or part of systematic theology but the basis of the whole ... If we have not a sound Christology, we cannot have a sound theology either. The doctrine of Christ is not an added difficulty for the doctrine of God but only the way in which it can be expressed. Christology is not a matter of attempting to reconcile the incarnation with a doctrine of God which we have already, for example, from the Old Testament of philosophy, but it is the basis of our doctrine of God.⁴⁸

In essence, if the Believer is to mimic or imitate (*imitatio Christi*) the life and actions of Christ, then an understanding of Christology is warranted.

Walter Lowe in his chapter on Christ and Salvation in *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks* proposes that “the study of the historical Jesus must include the Jesus that identified with the poor and outcast, the Christ who pronounced judgment upon all the self-serving ideologies—including the complacent Christologies—which ignore and thus condone the hidden violence of the status quo.”⁴⁹ Additionally, it is Jesus “The Liberator” that grounds Christology in a new vision of history. Within this context the study of Christ is not a generalized notion of history, but the concrete, self-critical practice of following in the way of Jesus’ prophetic ministry.⁵⁰ Related to this research endeavor, it is through the liberating power of Christ (Lk 4:18-19) and the Gospel that we are able to break free from the bonds of unsound doctrine and religious tradition that have made living a guilt-free, fulfilling, balanced life difficult. As

⁴⁸ Owen C. Thomas, *Introduction to Theology*, 78.

⁴⁹ Walter Lowe, “Christ and Salvation” in *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks*, Peter C. Hodgson & Robert H. King, eds. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 244-245.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 245.

we seek to model our lives after that one the “Sinless One” it is crucial that the problem of sin be examined in relationship to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure.

Sin

Regardless of the manner in which we posture arguments about our failure to obey the word of God, the harsh fact is that disobedience remains sin. As we become entrapped by work, fail to obey the Sabbath commandment, exercise poor stewardship over time and bodies, and ignore the biblical mandates to enjoy life and leisure, we must acknowledge sin. Regardless of whether we sin via commission or omission, or whether sin is blatant (*harmatia*) or simply an oversight (*adakia*), it must be accounted for. Because of the love of God (Jn 3:16), the example and mediation of Christ (Heb 12:1-2), and the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Jn 14: 25), we are able to confess, seek forgiveness, repent, and overcome sin.

Susan L. Nelson in *Healing the Broken Heart: Sin, Alienation and the Gift of Grace* directs attention to the extremely personal nature of sin. Nelson argues that not only do we sin against God, but we also sin against ourselves. The author states with full clarity, “But sin is also against ourselves, for in denying God’s new possibility, we also deny what is our won best possibility. And in living in old ways that have constrained our souls, then we sin against ourselves as well.”⁵¹ As the people of God live hurried, work-filled lives, absent of leisure, sin is committed against God and ourselves.

Andrew Sung Park addresses the suffering which accompanies sin as “han.” The deep wounds of victims (han) are a direct function of sin. Wounds may be inflicted by an

⁵¹ Susan L. Nelson, *Healing the Broken Heart: Sin Alienation and the Gift of Grace* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1997), 34.

oppressor or can be inflicted by ourselves. Park defines sin as “a thought, word, deed, attitude or intention that goes against God and humanity. It is a damaged relationship that sets us apart from God’s creation. It makes people isolated and withdrawn.”⁵² Park further expounds “where sin is committed, *han* arises as its corollary. The victims of sin develop the deep agonizing pain of *han*. They bear excruciating agony and humiliation caused by oppression, exploitation, abuse, mistreatment, and violation. If their intentions do not change, their *han* will only deepen.”⁵³ Park proceeds to say the following:

Sin causes *han* and *han* produces sin. Sin is of oppressors; *han* is of the oppressed. The sin of oppressors may cause a chain reaction via the *han* of the oppressed. Sometimes *han* causes *han*. Furthermore, unattended or unhealed *han* gives rise to evil. The evil can regenerate *han* and sin. Also, sin and *han* collaborate to engender evil. They overlap in many areas of life.⁵⁴

A related example of what Park suggests is when religious tradition is perpetuated as a means of constraining participation in leisure behaviors which are not sanctioned by church doctrine. The over-zealous promotion of work and under-education of congregants about leisure pursuits as a compliment to work is a prime example. The lack of teaching, poor teaching of biblical truths related to work, Sabbath, time and leisure may lead to victimization, which in turn must be counted as sin or *han*.

Reckoning with sin is essential to reconciliation with God, through Christ (Rom 5:1-11), but is also important to the maintenance of our physical and spiritual health. Despite the number of Christian counselors that propose sin as a source of psychopathology, the empirical evidence does not staunchly support the claim. Mark R.

⁵² Andrew Sung Park, *From Hurt to Healing: A Theology of the Wounded* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004), 28.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

McMinn in *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling* notes the following regarding sin as a cause of psychopathology:

First, a few writers have argued that sin ought to be seen as an important cause of emotional disturbance. Biblical counselors have been saying this for several decades, but their writing is usually not visible among the general psychological literature. A few psychologists have agreed with biblical counselors in seeing sin as a cause of psychopathology.⁵⁵

Based on McMinn's statement, the greater concern must be for the physical and spiritual health of the counselee. The physical and spiritual consequences of sin are of primary importance. McMinn further states that confrontation of sin should be a valid option for most Christian counselors. The method of choice must be determined by the abilities of the counselor and knowledge of the client. He further advises that the most important question to consider is "Which clients should I confront with their sin, and how should I go about confronting them?"⁵⁶

Sin was confronted in two ways in this research endeavor. First, through uncovering the source of unfounded beliefs and practices through the congregational survey. Second, in the leisure counseling group participants provided the opportunity to acknowledge and then develop strategies to adjust their beliefs and practices related to work, Sabbath-keeping, time, and leisure pursuits. But, no matter what the source of sin may be and the method used to confront sin, the key is compassion.

⁵⁵ Mark R. McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1996), 128.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 137.

Compassion

As Jesus looked out upon a fainting crowd in Matthew 9:35-38, he felt compassion for them. Jesus felt both sympathy and empathy for them, but was also motivated by love to act to change their condition. Donald Fleming in *World's Bible Dictionary* suggests that the people of God must be merciful and have pity on those who are in a disadvantaged position. Fleming states that in particular they should give help to those in society who are liable to be disadvantaged such as widows, orphans, aliens, the afflicted, the persecuted and the poor.⁵⁷ Rodney J. Hunter further defines compassion in the *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling* in the following manner:

Compassion from the Latin word meaning to bear, suffer. In common use it suggests sympathy or pity for the plight of another, to be moved emotionally by other's tragic situation or distress. In current pastoral care usage the desire to relieve suffering, implicit in pity, is present, but without condescension that pity may connote.⁵⁸

Hunter further elaborates that “compassion involves one's ability to reconstruct the situation of another and is laden with cultural meanings, values, and individual experiences that confirm them.”⁵⁹ The writer of Hebrews 4:15 illustrates the manner in which pastors and pastoral counselors must model the compassion of Jesus when seeking to relieve the suffering of others. Timothy Clinton and George Ohlschlager in their book *Competent Christian Counseling* note that “according to scripture, Jesus feels and suffers with us when we experience distress and pain. Compassion gives the therapeutic process

⁵⁷ Donald Fleming, *World's Bible Dictionary* (Iowa Falls: World, 1990), 288.

⁵⁸ Rodney J. Hunter, *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, 206.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 206-207.

a life changing force that must flow from the counselor to the client rather than the reverse.”⁶⁰

Bible commentator Matthew Henry in the *Matthew Henry Study Bible* (KJV) provides commentary on Matthew 9:36 which address compassion. Henry, in illustrating the compassion of Jesus as he peered out at the mass of burdened people provided the following commentary:

9:36 Moved with compassion. Not on a temporal account, but upon a spiritual account; He was concerned to see them ignorant and careless, and ready to perish. The most Christian compassion is compassion to souls. The Scribes and Pharisees burdened them with the traditions of the elders, therefore the fainted.⁶¹

Henry’s commentary, utilizing the example Jesus’ compassion toward the people solidifies the fact that compassion is the crux of effective counseling. Having witnessed the number of congregants that have fainted because of the religious tradition spoken of in Matthew 9:36, compassion must be a part of resolving the problem. Many have experienced distress and pain due to a lack of understanding about work, Sabbath, time and leisure, the researcher views compassion as central to this research endeavor.

Redemption

With acknowledgement of our shortcomings, repentance subsequently follows. The turning away from the way that is incorrect and turning toward God is the path to redemption. The term “redemption” implies that one has been purchased back from that which has held one captive. Donald K. McKim in the *Westminster Dictionary of*

⁶⁰ Timothy Clinton and George Ohlschlagel, *Competent Christian Counseling* (Colorado Springs: Water Brook, 2002), 192.

⁶¹ Matthew Henry, “Commentary on Matthew 9:36,” *Matthew Henry Study Bible* (Dallas: World, 1994), 1806.

Theological Terms notes “the term redemption is used theologically to indicate atonement, reconciliation, or salvation wherein liberation from forms of bondage such as sin, death, law of evil takes place through Christ.”⁶² In the case of respondents in this study, redemption comes through understanding God’s intent relative to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure and choosing to no longer be held in bondage by false beliefs and religious traditions. Redemption empowers the congregant to live abundantly through Christian liberty (Gal 5:1). At the core of Christian liberty lies grace, God’s unmerited favor toward humanity. It is grace that sustains the Believer beyond redemption.

Mark R. McMinn in *Psychology, Theology and Spirituality in Christian Counseling* challenges counselors and Believers alike to view redemption from multiple perspectives. McMinn states the following:

Recognizing Christ’s’ redemption is essential for Christian faith, but it is important to remember both ends of this redemptive process. Throughout history God has used humans as ambassadors of redemption. The narrative Scripture tells an important story of God’s sustaining a nation through both divine and human acts of provision and grace.⁶³

McMinn further comments:

The story of every Christian ought to be similar. The climax of our individual lives is found in the redemptive work of Christ, but as we look on our personal histories, we see much more. It is not just that God saved all humanity from sin two thousand years ago and then stopped acting redemptively. God continually redeems people from poverty, isolation, loneliness, emptiness, depression, alienation, and sin. These general acts of redemption are showered on us as we see God working through circumstances and other people to sustain us through difficult times and times of prosperity. God is with us.⁶⁴

⁶² McKim, 234.

⁶³ McMinn, 248.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

McMinn finally concludes that several important conclusions about redemption can be drawn by both the counselor and the congregant. These conclusions include the following:

1. Spiritual redemption can be found only in Christ, who provided the ransom to free us from our captivity to sin. In this sense, redemption is a one-time work fulfilled in Christ's atonement.
2. God not only redeems us spiritually but also delivers us from many perils and hardships, often through the kindness of others.
3. As God's redemption transforms our affections, we are motivated to be God's agents of redemption, helping those in need find hope and relief from trials.
4. Counseling provides opportunities to be redemptive agents in a fallen and needy world.⁶⁵

For congregants in the context of this study and for respondents participating in the Bible-based leisure counseling group redemption emanates from gaining an understanding of personal and corporate beliefs about work, Sabbath, time, and leisure and adjusting beliefs so they are scripturally correct. In the case of the counseling group, utilizing the Teaching Notes and scripture as a means of modifying attitudes and behaviors provides a unique opportunity for redemption. Redemption serves as the catalyst for living life abundantly.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 252.

Abundant Life

When we speak of abundant life or the living of a “full”, overflowing life, John 10:10 is commonly cited as the relevant passage of scripture. Many homileticians quote John 10:10 as support for the idea that Christianity leads to physical prosperity and “every good thing.” The verse has been used as a description of the Christian life, the normative pattern of life that Christians can expect because of God's blessings.

John clearly identifies Satan as the “thief” whose deceiving tactics seeks to kill and destroy the physical and spiritual life of Believers. In the case of work, Sabbath, time, and leisure, overwork, failure to declare and keep a Sabbath, being overcommitted and pressed for time and the failure to engage in leisure because of religious tradition are all subversive tactics used by the “evil one” to deter Believers from living abundantly.

What is ultimately important about this text is assurance that Jesus “The Liberator” came to provide a means to salvation but also the blessings which lead to the abundant and overflowing quality of the life.

Jesus’ main purpose was the salvation (health) of the sheep, which he defined as free access to pasture and fullness of life. Under his protection and by his gift they can experience the best life can offer. In the context of John's emphasis on eternal life, this statement takes on new significance. Jesus can give a whole new meaning to living because he provides full satisfaction and perfect guidance.

In summary, John 10:10 should not be used exclusively as though it gives some promise of an improved physical life for the Christian. Such a view, in light of the context, is shallow, and it overlooks the profound truth of the passage. The passage promises superior, superabundant spiritual life, life empowered by the indwelling of

Jesus Christ. Because Christians “have” Jesus Christ, because he lives within them, they have the riches of the superabundant life.

In summary God, Jesus, sin, compassion, redemption, and abundant life are the critical theological constructs for this project. Having defined the essential terms, and theological constructs emphasis will now be placed on the theological methods. A discussion on Liberation Theology and Paul Tillich’s Correlation Method follows.

Theological Methods

In developing the theological foundation for the project and study, there are two theological methods that are relevant. The first, “Liberation Theology”, provides the impetus for addressing the human socio-economic conditions which create the problem. The response to the problem lies in making serious calls for a commitment to the poor and theological reflection to solidify change. Lastly, in light of the numerous questions that surround the reality of the human condition related to work and leisure, Paul Tillich’s “Correlation Method” is appropriate. Questions stem from analyzing the condition and the answers to the questions lie in the biblical text. Both methods are discussed in suitable detail in this section. Additionally, theological concerns related to work, Sabbath, and leisure from a doctrinal standpoint are discussed. At the core of the arguments presented below lies that fact that Believers are “saved” from the penalty of sin, but are not liberated. Salvation and liberation must work in tandem if the Believer is going to live the “abundant life” that Christ promised and died to give.

Liberation Theology

In light of the inherent problems related to beliefs pertaining to work, rest, Sabbath and leisure in the Judeo-Christian tradition, liberation theology is the most applicable branch of theology required to “unshackle” believers. Donald K. McKim in the *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* defines liberation theology in the as, “various theological movements which see the gospel as liberation from all forms of oppression—economic, spiritual, political and social. The emphasis is on “praxis,” or the practical ways in which God call for the liberation of the oppressed is accomplished.”⁶⁶ Sociologist Max Weber and renown leader Karl Marx both expressed concern over the capitalistic motivations inextricably tied to the “protestant ethic.” Both men were extremely concerned over the relationship between religious interests and economic motivations of people. Weber and Marx both concluded that, “capitalism in a generic sense has occurred wherever the monetary mechanism exists.”⁶⁷

Rodney J. Hunter in the *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling* provides an alternative but related definition of Liberation Theology. Hunter states that Liberation Theology is, “the mutually critical intersection of a particular (esp. Latin American) theology and a particular (esp. North American) therapy, such which draws in different ways on the secular disciplines of sociology and psychology as well as Scriptures and church tradition.”⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Donald K. McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 160.

⁶⁷ Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1922), xix.

⁶⁸ Rodney J. Hunter, 160.

What we are being liberating from in the case of Christian leisure, are the bonds of legalism and tradition. Liberation theology understands itself as critical reflection and action upon the vocation of ministry set forth in the gospel. It reaffirms the gospel's liberation of the poor and the oppressed; it argues that poverty must be examined as a systemic condition involving power relationships, and it asserts that theology must be interpreted in the context of the total society in which the gospel is preached. Succinctly stated, authentic, gospel-centered self-transformation necessitates the transformation of power relationships.⁶⁹ Jesus in Luke 4:18-19 (KJV), while citing Isaiah 61:1-2, underscores the liberating power of the gospel and the task of the pastoral counselor/care-giver. Jesus, The Great Liberator states:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Hunter further argues that the pastoral care is “emancipatory praxis.”⁷⁰ The pastoral caregiver should focus on understanding the power and interpersonal dynamics of relationships. The aim is to engage and empower the counselee to generate theological and personal insights which lead to personal adjustment, self-realization, self-acceptance, and emancipation from the forces that bind. An example of the liberating power of the gospel in pastoral ministry and the utilization of practical theology to empower people to enjoy the “small leisurely pleasures” God provides us with lies in the example of dancing at a church sponsored Christmas social.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church sponsors an “All Ministry Christmas Social” annually. It is a time of rejoicing over “Christ as the reason for the Christmas season” and to celebrate the labor and accomplishments of ministry. In 2003, members of the church began to inquire about integrating “line dancing” into the event to allow attendees to relax, actively engage in the fellowship and enjoy Christian leisure outside of worship. Reverend Dr. Robert E. Baines, Jr., to prepare members for the advent of dancing at a Christian event wrote the explanatory memorandum entitled “*From the Pastor’s Desk: Dancing at a Church Sponsored Function.*” The memo located in Appendix A, provided the scriptural basis for dancing at a church event as well as outlined the biblical responsibilities for persons in attendance that opted to dance. The fact that the memo was generated illustrates the need for emancipatory praxis. The major concern over dancing at a church sponsored social event underscores the need for liberation from the shackles of religious tradition. This example exponentially increases the value of teaching of sound doctrine, the study of scripture, and most importantly the freedom to live life abundantly.

Andrew Purves and Mark Achtemeier point the way to a solution to bondage. In *Union in Christ: A Declaration for the Church*, we are reminded that the response to the dilemma of failing to accept God’s gift of leisure lies in the liberating power of the word of God. “This word of God, with all of its life-transforming power, is active in and through the ministry of the Church. As we affirm and celebrate what the gospel is, we necessarily also reject those things that are contrary to it.”⁷¹

⁷¹ Andrew Purves and Mark Achtemeier, *Union in Christ: A Commentary for the Church, A Commentary with Questions for Study and Reflection* (Louisville: Witherspoon, 1999), 21.

Paul Tillich's Correlation Method

As the struggle persists to realign ourselves with the true will of God for our lives relative to work and leisure, Paul Tillich's "Method of Correlation" becomes extremely useful. The method of correlation, so basic to the systematic approach Tillich developed, indicates that believers are always involved in seeking answers implied in the questions of their own existence. As questions arise from the philosophical and scientific analysis of the human condition, answers are found in the Christian message, the biblical text. In essence, the Christian message provides the answers to the questions implied in human existence. Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church is a congregation that places a very high value on seeking answers to "life questions" through the study of the Bible and prayer. As a part the implicit and explicit theology of the church, doctrine suggests that God is revealed in the Bible and can be found in all circumstances in life. Tillich's theology nests well in the theology of the context.

The method of correlation implies that the question and answer must be correlated in such a way that the religious symbol is interpreted as the adequate answer to a question, implied in man's existence, and asked in primitive, pre-philosophical, or elaborated philosophical terms. For instance, the question implied in human finitude is answered in the symbols which constitute the idea of God; or the symbol of revelation answers the questions which drive reason to its own boundary; or the question implied in man's existential disruption and despair is answered in the symbol of the Christ and his appearance under the conditions of existence; or the idea of the divine Spirit is interpreted as the answer to the question implied in the tragic ambiguities of life, especially man's spiritual life; or the problems of the meaning of history are answered in the symbol of the

Kingdom of God. In all these cases the method of correlation establishes a mutual interdependence between questions and answers.⁷²

The questions implied in human existence determine the meaning and the theological interpretation of the answers as they appear in the classical religious concepts. The form of the questions, whether basic or philosophical, is decisive for the theological form in which the answer is given. And, conversely, the substance of the question is determined by the substance of the answer. Humanity is not able to ask questions concerning God, revelation, Christ, etc., who has not already received some answer. Thus we can say: With respect to man's ultimate concern the questions contain the substance of the answers, and the answers are shaped by the form of the questions. Here the rational element in theological method has a determining influence on theological propositions -- not on their substance but on their form. But there is no way of saying a priori how much substance is hidden in the form. This can be said only in the process of theological work, and never fully. The reception of the "new reality" is always conditioned by the "old reality" which is conquered and fulfilled by it.⁷³

A few examples may suffice to give a concrete impression of the method of correlation. If the question implied in human finitude is the question of God and the idea of God is the answer to this question, then modern existential analysis of human finitude becomes extremely valuable for the theological treatment of the idea of God. God becomes the correlate to human anxiety and contingency. He becomes the symbol of a "transcendent courage", in which the characteristics of finitude, as essential insecurity,

⁷² Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Volume One* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 18-25.

⁷³ Ibid.

loneliness, having to die, etc., are overcome. In this way the idea of God receives existential significance. The meaningless and self-contradictory question about the “existence of God” is replaced by an intensely meaningful question concerning our participation in an infinite communion, security, power, and meaning in the divine life.

In the same way the question implied in the self-destructive trends of man’s personal and social life is to be understood as the question to which the central Christian statement that Jesus is the Christ gives the answer. If Christology is treated on the basis of this correlation, it interprets the picture of Jesus Christ as the ultimate manifestation of saving power in life and history, as the appearance of a “new reality”, a power of wholeness and reconciliation conquering the “demonic” mechanisms in personal and social existence. As society continues down the destructive path of overwork, failure to observe and keep a Sabbath, misuse of time and underutilization of constructive leisure, the response to the condition and all of the foundational questions are found in the words of Jesus.⁷⁴

Correlation describes things as they show themselves to the religious consciousness in the light of the human situation, the questions implied in it, and the answers given to it by the Christian message. Theology has rediscovered its correlative and existential character. It has overcome a theology of objective statements and subjective emotions. It has become again a way of giving answers to the questions which are our ultimate concern. As we pose the hard questions relative to work, rest, Sabbath, time and leisure, the answers based on Tillich’s theology, are found in and through God, as revealed in scripture.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

Sources of Doctrinal and Theological Tension Within the Church and Context

It is critically important to understand what the Church has declared about Sabbath. The doctrinal position on Sabbath impacts that manner in which congregants exercise stewardship over work, rest, time, and leisure in their lives. There are several examples of Protestant teachings on Sabbath across denominations. Examples from the Baptist and Presbyterian faith traditions help to illustrate the point.

As noted in Chapter One, in the Baptist faith tradition, Article Fifteen of the *Articles of Faith*, entitled “*Of the Christian Sabbath*”, addresses the importance of the Christian Sabbath to the lives of practicing Baptists. The aforementioned article states the following:

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord’s Day, or Christian Sabbath; and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for the rest that remaineth for the people of God.⁷⁵

Despite the theological import of this particular article and its importance in the daily living of congregants, it remains a source of tension. The statement “abstain from secular labor” in the article lies in tension with the work lives of many congregants. Some have “non-traditional” work schedules and cannot observe the Sunday as a Sabbath Day as recommended. Secondly, serious questions surface when an attempt to define what the term “sinful recreations” constitutes. A major concern is does one sin against God due to non-observance of the Christian Sabbath due to being a faithful steward of the job that

⁷⁵ Ibid., 43.

God has blessed one with? Does a dinner and “R” rated movie on Sunday comprise “sinful recreation?”

In the case of the Presbyterian Church, USA, the “Larger Catechism” provides a more than adequate definition of the Fourth Commandment and its application to the lives of congregants. The aim is to provide clarity on Sabbath and its importance to the Christian faith and the denomination. The catechism in its entirety is located in Appendix A. Sections 7.225-7.231 provide questions and answers related to the understanding and keeping the Sabbath.⁷⁶ Withstanding the detail in which the document is written, the similar types of challenges abound relative to the practical application of the Fourth Commandment.

Historical Warrants

This section is written with the intent of providing a historical backdrop to the concepts of Sabbath, time, work, leisure, and care-giving. Establishing a historical linkage to the biblical and theological underpinnings of each concept is vital to the project.

Sabbath

Historical Development of First Day Sabbath

There seems to be some evidence to suggest that the practice began with the Apostles. The Seventh Day Adventists vehemently argue that the Emperor Constantine changed the day for Sabbath observance from Saturday to Sunday, which is false. The early church very clearly observed the first day of the week as its day for public worship

⁷⁶ Presbyterian Church (USA). *The Book of Confessions* (Louisville: Presbyterian Church USA, 2002), 214-215.

(Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2). Just why Christians should have met on the first day of the week has never been satisfactorily answered by upholders of the seventh-day Sabbath. Their practice is a mystery to us unless we recognize that it had apostolic sanction.

The concept further developed and was enacted into law in the Roman Empire. In 321 A.D. the Emperor Constantine issued regulations against working on Sunday. He enforced the observance of the first day of the week, a very different thing from commencing it. In 789 Charlemagne used the fourth commandment to validate his enforcement of Sabbath observance. The practice was later received in the era of Protestantism. During the period of the Reformation, Martin Luther rejected Sabbath-keeping, though Calvin maintained it, stoutly defending the observance against the criticism of “those restless souls” who decried it as Judaism. The Puritans strongly adhered to Sabbath observance, as did Scottish Presbyterians.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* (chapter 22, sections- 6.118, 6.119) sums up the Protestant view:

As it is of the law of nature, that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God; so, in his Word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto him; which from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week; and, from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lord’s day, and is to be continued to the end of the world, as the Christian Sabbath. This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations; but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship and in the duties of necessity and mercy.”⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Presbyterian Church (USA), *Westminster Confession of Faith, Book of Confessions: Study Edition* (Louisville: Geneva Press, 1996).

Alan Cairns in his article “*The Historical Development of the First Sabbath Day*”

comments further on the Sabbath. He provides the following historical statement:

“This position has generally prevailed among Protestants, though the Seventh Day Baptists (1671) reverted to the observance of the Jewish Sabbath (as did the Seventh Day Adventists in 1845). Under the influence of dispensationalism observance of the Christian Sabbath has largely been abandoned by great numbers of Christians, though God’s promise is still “If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable...then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it” (Isa 58:13, 14).”⁷⁸

John Calvin, in his work *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, provides a general interpretation of the Fourth Commandment. Calvin proposes that the primary intent of this commandment is to meditate on the Kingdom of God in ways that were prescribed by the Creator. He also notes that there are conditions under which this day is to be kept. In outlining these conditions under which the Sabbath Day is to be kept he notes the following:

First, under the repose of the seventh day the heavenly Lawgiver meant to represent to the people of Israel spiritual rest, in which believers ought to lay aside their own works to allow God to work in them. Secondly, he meant that there was to be a stated day for them to assemble and hear the law and perform the rites, and thus through this remembrance to be trained in piety. Thirdly, he resolved to give a day of rest to servants and those who are under the authority of others, in order that they should have some respite from toil. (2.8.28)⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Alan Cairns, “Historical Development of First Day Sabbath,” in *Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Greenville: Emerald House Group, Inc., 1998), 321.

⁷⁹ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John T. McNeil ed. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), 394-395.

Religions and Secular Views Related to Time

There are distinct differences in views related to time within religious and secular thought. Secular approaches to time focus upon the interdependence of time periods, interlinking how days, weeks and months relate to one another. Often the method and importance of time is relegated to the method of counting. This line of thinking assumes that creation stops short of considering its consequences. Time is conceived as finite and dependent. Time is then partitioned and allocated based on a myriad of factors. Periods of time emanate directly out of their predecessors and are thereby construed to be ordinary. Seldom are questions raised about the dependence of finite time overall or any of its critical moments. In contrast, religions question the nature of reality. Conceiving the temporal as finite, the consequences of its limits are accepted and movement is then made toward the infinite and eternal.

An interesting secular view of time is espoused by Stephen Hawking. In the theological chapter of *A Brief History of Time*, Hawking goes through painstaking effort to distinguish between “real time” and “imaginary time.” “Real time” is the sort of time with which one reckons in construing the course of the universe by classic relativity theory. “Imaginary time” is the sort of time with which one reckons when quantum mechanics are brought in to the enterprise.”⁸⁰ “Real time is very real because it can have an arrow, because relations on its horizon can be construed as true didactic relations. Thus, in a state of real time, it is possible for the universe to have boundaries that can be called its beginning and ending.” Real and imagined time are metaphysically different.

⁸⁰ Robert W. Jenson, *Essays in Theology of Culture* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 197.

Only “real time” can be experienced, since only in “real time” can there be experience. Time, more inwardly than space, is what we experience in experiencing anything at all. Time must possess the metaphysical characteristics of both of Hawking’s “real time” and “imaginary time,” if there is to be time at all. Time is precisely the horizon of experience, with both nouns demanding full weight.”⁸¹ A cursory understanding of this important theory is needed to really grasp the gravity of time within a theological context. The important concepts of Sabbath, rest, work and leisure are all grounded in time, “real time.” All of our experiences, in each area, manifest themselves through the use of time.

Sabbath Time

Believers have developed varied ways and times of honoring God’s intent. Many know about the Jewish observance of the Shabbat, the weekly day of rest that starts at sundown on Friday and culminates at sundown on Saturday. Celebration of Shabbat includes a meal and a period of worship held in the home. This worship acknowledges the work of God as the divine source of all goodness and praises God’s faithfulness in supplying our expressed and unexpressed needs. Across Christian denominations, Sabbath traditions are observed. These often will restrict activity to promote a strict adherence to rest. Worship is also a large part of these Sabbath traditions and may include both home and corporate worship.

Sabbath observance was once reinforced in this nation by both customs and laws. Since the time of the Puritans, businesses have closed on Sunday in observance of the Sabbath period. “Blue Laws” which were frequently written on blue colored paper were adopted as a means of codifying the Sabbath. It is not uncommon in this century to find

⁸¹ Ibid., 198.

sports and athletic contests played on days other than Sunday, even though the trend suggests otherwise. Many choose Sunday to work to avoid the frantic pace of the Monday through Friday office regimen. God's wisdom in establishing the Sabbath calls us to recognize a deep and chilling truth: The rhythm of activity followed by rest acknowledges our boundaries, human limitations and our reliance upon the Creator. Sabbath time is much more than allocating one day in the week to renew our sense of God's presence with us. When we take time to rest, engage in holy leisure, to take a reprieve from work, we remember and witness to one another that we are not self-reliant.

There are social implications of Sabbath time. Beginning with the first notation of the Sabbath in the Pentateuch, Sabbath is viewed as a social institution. It is a period of collective rest and freedom. Sabbath time brings to remembrance the Mosaic covenant of former ex-slaves with God and a covenant in Christ of people whose status lies in their faith in the Son of God. In this there is a functional equality for all. Authentic Sabbath time exceeds the boundaries of position and status and lies in the One who created all. Sabbath is a right of all, not just for the select. Genuine Sabbath time requires a daily rhythm of rest and work and also a divine sense of justice that includes a right to all wealth of the land, conditioned by personal need, labor, gift, and calling.⁸² Sabbath time connotes freedom and the opportunity to grow into a fuller humanity. This type of time offers the Christian to appreciate rather than manipulate the on-goings of life to our benefit. Sabbath time demands an "intentional cessation" from activity which often leads to conflict within the social order and within the scheme of one's rhythm of life. It lovingly causes the Believer to reverently stop when society on the whole cannot.

⁸² Tilden Edwards, *Sabbath Time* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room, 1993), 86-87.

Time and Sabbath-Keeping

Dorothy C. Bass in an article entitled, “*Rediscovering the Sabbath (Part 1 and 2)*” earnestly wrestles with the idea of Sabbath keeping. Bass expounds upon the problem of Americans being overly busy to the point that the practice of Sabbath-keeping is totally ignored. Bass calls Sabbath keeping “a gift waiting to be unwrapped, a confirmation that we are not without help in shaping the renewing ways of life for which we long.”⁸³ She also proposes that Sabbath keeping can be of direct benefit to both the overworked and underworked in society. Perhaps what may motivate people to return to Sabbath keeping is moving toward a Sabbath rhythm—six days of work and one day of rest.

In Part 2 of the same article Bass encourages people and the Church to remove the roadblocks to Sabbath keeping. Some of the roadblocks include the reputation that many Christians have given to the day of respite and worship and religious diversity and the myriad of economic factors (e.g. - the obligation to work and consumerism) that tie into the day. Sabbath keeping is beneficial to all, namely in that it teaches the interdependence of the many facets of living. Bass suggests that, “good Sabbaths make good Christians by regularly reminding us of God’s creative, liberating, and redeeming presence, not only in words but also through a practice we do together in response to that presence.”⁸⁴

⁸³ Dorothy C. Bass, “Rediscovering the Sabbath, Part 1,” *Christianity Today* 2, 1 September 1997 [journal on-line]; available from <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/7ta/7ta38a.html> ; Internet; accessed 3 October 2004.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

Bass further argues in her article *Christian Formation in and for Sabbath Rest* that it is a requirement of the community of faith to collectively move toward Sabbath observance as a practice. Bass states:

A Christian practice is a complex pattern of human activity, engaged in with others over time, in and through which life together takes shape in response to and in the light of God's active presence for the life of the world in Jesus Christ. In contrast to a single 'act' or even an ongoing 'activity' or 'discipline,' a Christian practice is encompassing enough to address a need that is fundamental to human existence as such—in the case of Sabbath observance, the need for rest and communion with God—in ways that reflect God's purposes for humankind. Thus, we contend, Christian practices bear the embodied wisdom of God's people about living in ways that reflect and respond to God's love for the whole world.⁸⁵

Practices which are ground in sound theology and history are important to the Christian faith. Bass notes clearly that despite the roots of every Christian practice within history each is lived imperfectly, and sometimes even in such a distorted manner that it becomes repressive or possibly harmful. As a result, faithful engagement in any practice requires practitioners to repeatedly confess and repent of the sin which distorts the practice and to receive the new life God provides, within the practice, to them and to the world.⁸⁶

In order to engage in Sabbath keeping, one must first understand the Sabbath and its biblical basis. Sabbath is not a “free day” or “a day off” which some clergy are guilty of naming it as such. Renown Presbyterian author and pastor Eugene Peterson declares that noting Sabbath as a “day off” “bastardizes” the true meaning of the term.⁸⁷ Certainly,

⁸⁵ Dorothy C. Bass, “Christian Formation in Rest and for Sabbath,” *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 59 (January 2005): 27.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

sound arguments can be made for the value of “a day off”, but the intent is secular and utilitarian. Sabbath in its proper context denotes a period of rest and cessation from work.

Peterson cautions that within our conception of Sabbath is the important difference in the manner in which Americans keep time. Sabbath is a Hebrew concept constructed with a divergent view of time. Time is infused into a rhythm, which supercedes the clock. Establishing a rhythm aids in our capacity to cease from labor and enter into rest. We develop a sense of control sufficient to “rest on the seventh day.” According to Peterson, “Sabbath-keeping often feels like an interruption, an interference with our routines. It challenges assumptions we gradually build up that our daily work is indispensable in making the world go.”⁸⁸ Sabbath-keeping according to Peterson, is a practice we should up-hold because God did it (Ex. 20:8-11) and it is a time to remember the fact that our Hebrew ancestors had no vacation while enslaved for 400 years in Egypt (Deut. 5:15). The mandate is to set aside a day which is to be hallowed. There are no hard and fast rules for doing so, what is important is making a commitment to be responsive to what God has done. As Peterson notes, “the precedent is to quit doing and simply be divine.”⁸⁹

Quiet Time

A practice that is most commonly associated with recent spiritual awakenings is that of seeking times of silence in our lives. One enters into a leisurely state to commune with God. It is difficult to enter this state of being and hear the Spirit with all of the noise

⁸⁷ Eugene H. Peterson, “Rhythms of Grace,” *Weavings*, 8, no.1, (1993): 15.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

around us. This time set aside for silence during the day is often called “quiet time.”

Many Christians who use quiet time lead into it with a certain kind of noise: praise or intercessory prayer. Most of us find it easier to be silent once we take off the weight of our burdens for those we love and lay them before God. But others, especially those of a “contemplative” approach, find that to be too “noisy”, and find that the first thing to do is to listen to God by silence, and then lead out of it with intercessions. Quiet time is more than just a daily appointment with God. It ultimately represents obedience to God’s requirement to enter into a state of holy rest. It is the time when we can actively pursue God, practice our spiritual disciplines and heed to our spiritual desires. It represents a period in which we can solicit the undivided attention of the Lord.⁹⁰

The stillness of the Sabbath affords us the privilege of removing ourselves from the physical and mental labors and rest our souls. God and Jesus both entered into a state of quiet rest. This quiet Sabbath period of reflection affords us an opportunity to rest in prayer. Ron Farr in his article, *Sabbath Resting in God*, elaborates upon our need to regularly enter into restful prayer during Sabbath times. Farr elucidates about the problem of busyness and how the silent, still voice of God is silenced within the noise of our lives. He brings forth the issue of Sabbath resting in prayer running counter to the culturally engrained Protestant work ethic. Being driven by the work ethic as a society we have evolved into a mass of people “perpetually doing” as opposed to people who cognitively can work through the terminality of work efforts.

⁹⁰ Stephen D. Eyre, *Drawing Close to God: The Essentials of a Dynamic Quiet Time* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 23-28.

Farr proclaims that, “in an odd sort of way it is painful for us to rest because resting means just sitting with things as they are for awhile, just sitting with our own unresolved struggles and anxieties, just sitting with our neighbor’s untended wounds.”⁹¹ It is in this spiritual space, place and time that we come to terms with the “soft spots” in our lives and begin to reckon with them. As people we are full of conflicts which demand our immediate tension and which draw us away from prayerful rest. Our need for deep seated rest often is critical to our very being. It is in the space and time of Sabbath and its silences that we find rest. It is there that we become centered again and can again become sensitized to the urgings of the small still voice within our souls. In Sabbath silences we find the “place of release and rest.”

Stephen D. Eyre offers suggestions for creating opportunities for quiet time in the life of the Christian. Eyre brings for the following strategies for acquiring this sacred time:

We must chose to set aside holy time daily. We not only need our regular times; we need extended holy times with God that allow for a sense of leisure. We need a sense of continuity in our lives to cultivate holy time. We need to be flexible in our holy times with God. We must find a holy place to meet God on a daily basis. We must choose to be alone in solitude with God and away from distractions.⁹²

Eyre concludes that all of the aforementioned guidelines are essential for grasp this direly needed block of time.

⁹¹ Ron Farr, Sabbath Resting in God, *Weavings*, 8, no.1, (1993): 24.

⁹² Stephen D. Eyre, 31-53.

Richard J. Foster in his book *Celebration of Discipline: The Path of Spiritual Growth*, speaks to the issue of setting apart, sacred, quiet time to be with God, within the context of leisure. Foster argues that we must set aside that hallowed time and prepare ourselves for it. He notes that if we are constantly moving about in a frenzy of activity then we are unable to find the quiet time and most importantly be unable to prepare ourselves for the precious moments of silence. Foster refers to the church Fathers that often referred to this time as *otium sanctum*, “holy leisure.” This concept refers to the state of balance and peacefulness in life, which enables and empowers us to pace ourselves and rest during the course of the day. There is an inclination to define people in terms of their productive outputs, but Foster warns that we should be more concerned with our capacity to enter into the state of holy leisure. Lastly, Foster suggests that if we are going to succeed “in the contemplative way – the way of leisure – we must pursue it with zealous determination.”⁹³

The Sabbath rest is not solely for our personal rejuvenation, but is for all of creation. As we become accustomed to relinquishing ourselves to God’s rest, we also give God a “large space” to enter and change us. Ultimately, we are compelled to share with others the meaningfulness of entering into His rest. As Christians, who are of finite resources, our duty is to enter into His rest as often as possible. We do this by entering into a state of holy leisure, by making a commitment to observe Sabbath and rest.

⁹³ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* rev. ed. (San Francisco: Harper, 1988), 27.

The Efficient Use of Time

It has, perhaps, always been true that "time is money." But for the current generation, this maxim has a new twist. In the new millennium, time has become even more scarce than money and therefore more valuable. As with any commodity, the law of supply and demand determines value. In the last two decades, free time has grown scarce and hence has become a valuable possession. As we moved beyond the decade nineties and into the first year of the new century, we are still experiencing a time famine. Leisure time, once plentiful and elastic, is now scarce and elusive. People seeking the good life are finding it increasingly difficult to enjoy it, even if they can afford it. What money was in the decades of 1980's and 1990's, time has become in the new millennium. In an age of shrinking leisure time, for many time has become the most precious and elusive commodity in the land. Futurists once predicted that Americans would experience an abundance of leisure time by the year 2000 due to a multiplicity of technology improvements. Yet these technological advancement have not freed humanity from their labors. Most people remain exceptionally busy.

Technological efficiency has also increased competition. Laborsaving devices that are supposed to make life easier frequently force people to work harder. Baby boomers that are intensely competing with one another for jobs and prestigious promotions avidly employ the latest equipment to give them an edge. In the frenetic dash for success or just plain survival, leisure time becomes a scarce commodity.

Kerby Anderson, in his article, "*Time and Busyness*" summarizes several key studies which illustrate the time crunch experienced by women and families. A 1989 survey done by *Family Circle Magazine* documented the loss of time in families,

especially for working mothers. A resounding 71 percent of those surveyed said their lives had gotten busier in the previous year. Nearly one-third attributed this increase in busyness to expanding work loads at the office, the demands of a new job, or the pressures of starting a business or returning to work. Not only were the women working longer hours, but many were also working on weekends, and nearly a third often took work home. Dual-income couples reported major difficulties finding time for each other. Negotiating schedules and calendar-juggling were daily activities. Three out of four women in the survey reported that finding enough time to be alone with their husbands was "often" or "sometimes" a major stress in their relationships. When asked, "In a time crunch, who gets put on the back burner?" fifty-percent said friends, then husbands, and then other family members.⁹⁴ Those hit hardest by time pressures were single parents.

The study also sought to garner perceptions about satisfaction with the amount of available time women had to spend alone. But whether they were in the work force or full-time homemakers, more than half of the women surveyed were either "very" or "somewhat" dissatisfied with the amount of time they have alone. Only 30 percent try to set aside four or more hours a week just for themselves. Another 30 percent carve out two to three hours. But 19 percent say they give themselves an hour or less a week, and 20 percent do not allot themselves any leisure time at all.⁹⁵ The time pressure on women and families are significant. The additional time will not come without changes in our lifestyles.

⁹⁴ Kerby Anderson. "Time and Busyness," *Probe Magazine* 4-5, 1992 [journal on-line]; available from <http://www.leaderu.com/orgs/probe/docs/time.html>; Internet; accessed 3 October 2004.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

The task at hand is to efficiently and effectively manage time. Time or the lack of it, will continue to dominate our thinking through the first decade of the new millennium. All of us are in the midst of a time crunch--the solution is to recognize our priorities and apply them rigorously to our lives. First, we must establish biblical priorities in our lives. Often our busyness is merely a symptom of a deeper problem, such as materialism. In Luke 12:16-20, Jesus illustrated this danger with the parable of the rich fool. There are a number of applications we can derive from this passage. First, we should make sure that we are not so involved in the affairs of the world that we neglect the affairs of the spirit. One of the clear mandates from the text is to cease from work and choose leisure.

Second, we should ask ourselves if we are tearing down productive resources for a more luxurious lifestyle. Often our indulgences constrain our time and financial resources. This observation leads to our second biblical principle: fight materialism in our lives. Proverbs 28:20 notes: "He who makes haste to be rich will not go unpunished." Materialism in many instances brings with it a haste to get rich. Often our lack of time is tied to our haste to get rich, to feed our greed. We need to ask ourselves the fundamental question, How much do we really need? If we fight materialism in our lives and cut back on the lavishness of our lifestyle, we might be surprised how much time we will free up.

A third biblical principle is to redeem the time. Ephesians 5:15-16 states, "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil." Colossians 4:5 says, "Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, redeeming the time." Unlike many of the other resources God has given us, time is not renewable. We may lose money, but we can always earn more.

We may lose our possessions, but we can always acquire new ones. But time is a non-renewable commodity. If we squander our time, it is lost forever. All people, believer and non-believer, must carefully manage the time that God has given us. We must become “wise stewards” of time. It is a valuable resource, and we can either spend it on ourselves or redeem it as a spiritual investment. We can spend it only once, and how we spend it can have eternal consequences. We must not waste the resources God has given us. The charge is to redeem the time and use it for God's glory by finding the balance between work and leisure.

Work

In ancient narratives from the Greek and Judeo-Christian traditions, the subsequent fall from paradise is widely associated with a human choice based on a, selfish desire and on the other with the plunge into the condition humane-nakedness, the loss of immortality, the withdrawal of the sky, the opening of a plethora of woes, the cycle of birth and death, and the sentence to hard labor for life.

At the same time, myth informs us of a deeper level of universality; the mandate to work symbolizes man's physicality in the world in the sense of his separation from the divine, the cosmic, the natural. From this breach follows all suffering and toil. Significantly, in some versions of the story the point is made that in fact some form of work was originally designated for human beings. The Book of Genesis, for instance, indicates that Adam was first placed in the garden to work (or till) and keep it (2:15; 2:5); only after the Fall is there talk of toil or suffering and the sweat of the brow. A distinct line is drawn between the first human participation in divine work- the easy task of conforming to the cosmic order-and the labor under which we burden.

Work As The Antithesis of Leisure

Work and leisure historically are two terms that many construe as polar opposites. Despite the fact they are staged to be opposites, the realistic posture remains that they are inextricably tied together. Even the psychological associations with each term being divergent. Work typically has been and continues to be associated with productivity and usefulness. Leisure, a concept and term, has been unnecessarily maligned. Regardless of its redeeming value, leisure is generally associated with laziness, non-productivity, and slothfulness. This work-leisure dichotomy has existed since the Middle Ages and has often worked to our detriment on the whole.

The term *acedia* has been used to denote the idleness associated with the leisure and apart from work. This form of idleness inherently means that one chooses to terminate the rights that are attached to one's own nature. Under this definition, one ultimately chooses not be who one really is. According to Soren Kierkegaard, *acedia* is the despair from weakness which is analyzed as a "despairing refusal to be oneself."⁹⁶ Metaphysically and theologically, the notion of *acedia* means that "people do not, in the last resort, give consent of their will to their own being; that behind or beneath the dynamic activity of their existence, they are still not as one with themselves ... Face to face with the divine good within them; they are prey to sadness."⁹⁷ The polar opposite of this notion is the hardworking, industrious individuals with an economic context. This term was derived from the economic ethos of the Middle Ages. What is implied is that

⁹⁶ Soren Kierkegaard, "Sickness unto Death," in Josef Pieper, "Leisure as a Spiritual Attitude," *Weavings*, 8, no.1 (1993): 7.

⁹⁷ Thomas Aquinas, "Quaest. Disp. De malo," 11, 3 in Josef Pieper, "Leisure as a Spiritual Attitude," *Weavings*, Vol. 8, no.1 (1993): 7.

work becomes the end of one's life. Work is the predominate reason for existence.

Idleness was and remains the corrupter of work.

The scholarly theologian Thomas Aquinas viewed idleness as a sin against the third commandment. *Acedia* was considered as one of the seven cardinal sins. Idleness is the root cause of many faults and the precursor for making leisure impossible. Idleness can never be synonymous with leisure. If nothing else it is the outer absence of leisure. "Leisure is only possible when people are at one with themselves, when they acquiesce in one's own being. Idleness and the incapacity for leisure correspond with one another. Leisure is contrary to both."⁹⁸ The fear of idleness perhaps sheds additional light on why the Protestant work ethic became solidified within European and American culture. Perhaps *acedia*, idleness remains as the driving force behind the over-emphasis on work within contemporary society.

The Protestant Work Ethic

As previously noted, sociologist Max Weber is typically credited for coining the phrase "Protestant ethic." Weber used the term to describe the world view of a burgeoning middle class that served as the catalyst behind the development of capitalism. Weber believed that many of the ideas that of Protestantism were also related to capitalism. His rationale was the Christianity taught that work was a curse and that only works of charity would gain favor in the sight of God. He further believed that "secular asceticism" extolled the virtues of "restless, continuous, systematic work in a worldly calling."⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Josef Pieper, "Leisure as a Spiritual Attitude", 9.

Weber felt that there was a strong linkage between work and salvation within the Protestant faith. He noted that the Protestant ethic feature strong work related traits such as self-reliance, frugality and rationality. These traits are commonly found in entrepreneurs past and present who infused capital gained from business ventures back into the business and seldom spent money or time on frivolous leisure pursuits. By the late 1800's the Protestant work ethic had lost much of its religious foundation and thus simply evolved into a "work ethic." Wealth became the driving force behind hard work and work itself became the focal point of what many perceived to be the moral life. Regardless of the nature of one's work, it was felt that one might serve God best by developing one's character to the extent of abilities, through hard work.

Critics of the work ethic as we know it today raise a number of salient concerns. First, some critics argue that the work ethic is not an ethic but nothing more than just a ideological rationale, promulgated by the middle and upper classes, to justify inequality. Second, critics of the work ethic propose that "the spirit of the work ethic cannot apply if one is forced to survive, if one's options for work are severely limited, and if one's labor is not personally enriching."¹⁰⁰ The resounding inference is that the work ethic may be a myth. The aforementioned criticisms do not speak directly to the correlation between hard work and character, but raises the issue of quality of work life. Work itself can be categorized into three key areas; (1) physical; (2) mental; and (3) spiritual. Each in its own unique way impacts the quest for leisure.

⁹⁹ Lawrence C. Becker and Charlotte B. Becker, "Work" in *Encyclopedia of Ethics* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 1337-1338.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 1338.

Physical, Mental and Spiritual Work

No matter how mundane or overly complex the task, work may be experienced as exhausting or, if the natural and efficient operation of the body is discovered, it may be felt as easy, enjoyable, even rewarding, at least up to the point when muscle fatigue or mental distress takes over. But work unrelated to any higher meaning threatens to inspire the “work ethic” that so fascinated sociologist Max Weber who inferred that labor itself became the end of life and could easily become an idol or object of worship. Physical work may be taken as a starting point of experience, since one has to begin where one is: in the physical world.

Religiously viewed, physical work serves outwardly to maintain the world, in the sense of maintaining the order of the world or in the simple sense of paying creation back for the life than one has received as a gift. Both work itself, as a reflection of the primal structuring of the world, and the cycles of rest that punctuate it are ways of acknowledging the creative source as supreme. The mandate to serve the earth directly, to earn one’s daily bread literally, is an expression of this inexorable law of just returns. It is honored by the apostle Paul who noted: “If any would not work, neither should he eat.”(2 Thes 3:10) The acceptance of the human condition as a call to work may be the supreme act of obeisance or an act of obedience in penance for the original sin of disobedience.

On occasion, mental work may be far more laborious than physical work. Optimally, the function of mental work is to direct activity to the level of spirit. This is accomplished, by practicing a condition of attention at rest in which physical or intellectual activity can proceed naturally, and then, by deliberately dedicating the

activity to the sacred realm. The outward work may be offered for the benefit of all, but the inward workings elevate one to a higher spiritual plane. By this intention, outward work (physical labor) may be construed as sacred and spiritual. Such mental work strikes at the very heart of orthodox spiritual praxis, which mandates that all activity be hallowed at every moment by virtue of its relationship to the divine and all work to have for its goal the realization of one's natural being. This is the required ingredient to serve as the catalyst for transformation to a higher state.

Some would argue that preparation for the spiritual event of self-realization is traditionally the only real work there is. It demands the most stringent of efforts, calling as it does for the elimination of such obstacles as egocentrism, attachment to results and the abandonment of compulsive human activity. The power lies in one's capacity to delight in labor (physical or mental) to the point that it no longer psychologically and spiritually is construed as work. The sense of ardent labor is transformed into a flowing state of restful work. This state of what some call "non-doing" is an entirely pragmatic matter. University of Chicago psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has donned this phenomenon "flow experience." In his ground-breaking research which has profound implications for the manner in which society views work and leisure, he reports descriptions of moments in which subjects engaged full heartedly in activity, have experienced a release from habitual limitations and the work is thought to "flow by itself." Within Csikszentmihalyi's reasoning, work and the labor attached, move beyond the physical and mental stages, into the spiritual realm, where the challenge of labor intersects with the capacity to manage it on all levels. Here is where the state of "non-doing" is found.

Rhythm of Life

What appears to be significant in consideration of observing the Sabbath, resting, using time to our benefit, working and capturing periods of leisure, is the establishment of a rhythm of life. There is a time and season for all of the aforementioned items, the challenge is to gain proper perspective on prioritizing each. The task at hand is to live out each daily in a “right order.” This is a case of orthopraxy (practicing that which is correct) influencing orthodoxy (practicing correct beliefs). Participation in a right way of life speaks volumes above and beyond what half-filled words of faith cannot.

Establishing a rhythm of life demands the desolation of harmful paradigms related to time and the construction of a new standard of manner of living grounded in practical correct theological beliefs. This new rhythm may contain a variety of complementary dimensions. An example of this type of rhythm can be seen in the life and ministry of Jesus. There is an interwoven rhythm in his life consisting of the following: times of prayer (alone and corporate), active engagement in ministry, Sabbath observance and times for leisure. “In this rhythm, we discover the importance in spiritual development of attending both to our relationship with God and to creation (people and nature, without collapsing one into the other, even though a shared sense of life in God intimately and essentially relates and underlies them.”¹⁰¹ In essence, we have a an ontological relationship with God and that requires daily cultivation, and also a moral relationship with God that involves us in caring for life in particular called-for ways, also requiring intentional cultivation. A designated rhythm of life aids us in caring out this assignment. The intentional development of a rhythm of life requires an attitude of openness to change and obedience.

¹⁰¹ Tilden Edwards, *Sabbath Time* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room, 1993), 49.

Summary

In summary, an understanding of the concepts of work, rest, Sabbath, Jubilee, and time work are pivotal to the study of the use of leisure within contemporary society. A heightened level of awareness of the meaning of each of the aforementioned concepts is necessary for the development of a theologically based conception about the value and proper use of leisure in the life of the Christian. None of the aforementioned terms are independent of one another. All are interrelated and sacred in their own unique way. As time progresses and growth occurs within each human being, a “rhythm of life” should develop. It will empower the individual to engage in rest, obedience to the Sabbath and aid in the development of a proper perspective on work. Each of the key terms addressed in this chapter represents a “brick” in the development and evolution of leisure as a useful theological construct. The following section provides a detailed discussion of leisure and its many challenges in the lives of Christians and non-Christians alike.

Socio-Cultural-Historical Perspectives on Leisure and Pastoral Care

This sub-section section of the broader theological foundations sections provides a social-cultural-historical foundation for the understanding of the concept of leisure, its theological, and spiritual importance within contemporary society. Additionally, a brief history of pastoral care and pastoral care within the African American experience is provided.

The Work of Josef Pieper: Leisure, Christianity and Spirituality

Probably the most profound meditation on the meaning of leisure is a book by the German neo-Thomist philosopher Josef Pieper, *Leisure, the Basis of Culture*. It consists of two vital essays, the title piece (in German *Musse und Kult*, “Leisure and Worship” and “The Philosophical Act” both of which Pieper wrote in 1947. The two were published together in English in 1952 in a volume introduced by T. S. Eliot. The introduction by Eliot to *Leisure, the Basis of Culture* -- the first of several books by Pieper to appear in English -- is one sign of the seriousness with which he was regarded. Pieper was one of the first contemporary philosophers to hint at the necessity for Christians to have a leisure ethic. Well grounded in the philosophy of Aristotle and saturated in Thomistic teachings, Pieper in concert with Aristotle, concluded that philosophy and related scholarly endeavors depended on leisure.

Pieper was one of the pioneering writers who visualized the connection between leisure and spirituality. At the heart of his writings was the premise that Believers could experience the highest form of leisure through worship. Pieper proposed that within the context of spirituality leisure is experienced in its finest form. In the aforementioned book, Pieper brings forth several important foundational points related to leisure, spirituality and worship. Several of his philosophical positions on leisure would later be used to buttress arguments made by contemporary leisure philosophers. In *Leisure, the Basis of Culture*, Pieper constructs his arguments around the following key points: leisure is a condition of the soul; leisure is a form of stillness that is necessary preparation for accepting reality and is the disposition of receptive understanding, of contemplative beholding, and immersion in the real; leisure requires one to remain open to the

experience of leisure and the experience of freedom within the soul; leisure stands opposed to the exclusiveness of the paradigm of work as a social function; true leisure springs forth from the worship experience.¹⁰²

Pieper remained adamant about the importance of leisure as the mechanism which guarded against the erosion and perversion of culture. Pieper viewed culture as the repository of humanity's spiritual self-understanding. According to Pieper, leisure guarantees the integrity of high culture, its freedom from the endless round of means and ends that determines everyday life. It was Pieper's great accomplishment to understand the deep connection between leisure and spiritual freedom. Pieper is credited by proponents of leisure as one who extracted from the idea of leisure not only a theory of culture and its significance, but also a natural theology for contemporary times. The often quoted, scholarly work of Pieper contributed greatly to the modern understanding of leisure and spirituality.

A Brief Summary of the Key Historical Foundations of Leisure

This section provides a brief summary of the Greco-Roman influences which under gird the philosophy of leisure. It also highlights a sampling of thought about leisure through the middle-ages and into contemporary society. The information highlighted in this section is valuable in that much of the polarization of thought about the work-leisure dichotomy can be traced to these periods in time.

¹⁰² Josef Pieper, *Leisure, the Basis of Culture* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 1998), 30-36.

Leisure in the Agricultural Era

The first form of culture was hunters and gatherers, followed by agriculture. agriculture. Agriculture provided a stable supply of food and, when humankind began to labor in the soil, provided an opportunity for a long-term perspective on life. The development of agriculture enabled people to develop a sense of security resulting from a dependable food supply. With their energies no longer solely devoted to hunting or gathering enough food to survive, they could participate in other activities – activities that resulted in the advancement of civilization.

During the agricultural era, society established property rights for cultivation and farming. Prior to this no one person owned property; hunting or gathering occurred wherever food was found. As agriculture developed, so did the need for private property on which to produce crops. In order to protect and manage this property, a division of labor occurred. A ruling elite formed; government officials owned and managed the land; a military protected the land; and a peasant class farmed the land. A more complex form of social organization evolved than had been in place during preliterate society. For the first time in history, humankind produced a surplus of commodities, thus forming classes of people who were not involved directly in their production. Landowners, governmental officials, scribes, and artists were all supported by the efforts of others. These individuals became the “leisure class” as contrasted with individuals in the “working class.”

For the people living during the agricultural era, the concept of time changed. Time became a regulatory dimension of life, and people tied their lives more closely to changes in the seasons. When it was time to plant, people planted; when it was time to

harvest a crop, the harvest occurred. Leisure time and leisure activities became attached to these events, such as the autumn harvest celebrations. When the harvest was in, the great celebrations included games, food, dancing, socializing, and rituals. Furthermore, strong evidence indicates that people had a great deal of leisure time during certain seasons of the year when field work was slow.

In many cultures, the new class of individuals not directly associated with the production of commodities, and met their responsibility to society by aiding in the development of civilization. They used their time and intellectual capabilities to enhance the economic well-being of their culture, to establish political organizations, to develop religions, and to pursue intellectual and artistic activities. The Greeks, in particular, used leisure to advance civilization. According to the Greeks, “. . . without a leisure class, there can be no standards of taste, no encouragement of the arts, no civilization. No man [sic] in a hurry is quite civilized.”¹⁰³

Leisure in Ancient Greece

The Greeks believed that civilization advanced through the cultivation of the mind, body and spirit. As a result, the Greeks, especially the Athenians, took great interest in a variety of activities linked to the development of civilization. These activities included writing artistic endeavors, and athletics. Children living in ancient Greek society participated in a variety of play pursuits. School activities also prepared children for future leisure pursuits. Writing, reading, arithmetic, music, gymnastics, drawing, and painting were all part of the curriculum. Sports activities of youth served as a form of

¹⁰³ George Torkildsen, *Leisure and Recreation Management*, 4th ed. (New York: E & FN Spon, 1999), 65.

military preparation for males; they ran, hunted, wrestled, drove chariots, and hurled javelins.

Plato expressed a low regard for manual labor but had an elevated regard for the productive employment of leisure. Plato's writings were heavily influenced by his mentor Socrates, and thus much of the corpus of his writings represent a reconstruction of the thought of Socrates. Time to think, contemplate, study philosophy and time for self-development were all the necessary prerequisites for happiness. That time for Plato, was leisure. An analysis of Greek works illustrates the keen juxtaposition of culture, education and leisure. The term *paideia* meant "culture" and *paidos*, "boy" or "child", *peod* forms the root of our word "pedagogy", meaning the art or science of educating. *Paiedeia* also connotes education and self-improvement, which brings about an intentional molding of character and the ultimate justification for life.¹⁰⁴

The purpose of knowledge was to facilitate the making of correct choices, inclusive of choices related to leisure. Central to the philosophy of both Plato and Aristotle was how to obtain happiness. Moderation in all things was in keeping with natural justice; happiness is continuous, leisure is not a brief period but a lifetime. Plato and Aristotle differed on the work-leisure divide. Aristotle believed that occupational pursuits could not be tied to leisure (e.g. - military affairs). Aristotle placed business and war on one side of the continuum and leisure and peace on the other. There is a clear demarcation of what is construed as leisure. Plato's understanding of the work-leisure divide differentiation was quite different. This can be seen in the *Republic*, where Plato employs the term *scholē* in a very broad sense to includes meanings such as, spare time, freedom from other activities and self-possession or freedom.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 66.

Classical View of Leisure: Athenian Schole

Perhaps the most influential Athenian philosopher recognizing the need for leisure was Aristotle, who believed in a balance between work and leisure. Aristotle was very careful to differentiate between leisure (*schole*), work (*aschole*) and culture (*paideia*). He suggests that individuals must learn to do all, but leisure is to be preferred. Leisure, according to Aristotle, provides the opportunity for intellectual development, provides a way of relaxing the soul, and enhances enjoyment of life. Intellectual virtues were more perfect than moral ones since, according to Aristotle, the rational soul to which they belonged was superior to the irrational, seat of moral virtues. The most perfect of the virtues was theoretical wisdom, *sophia*, and the pursuit of it. The contemplative life was far preferred to the active life one because it was continuous, pleasurable and leisure-filled. Additionally, since the contemplative man mimicked the activity of the gods, he would be favored by the gods.¹⁰⁵ The Aristotelian view of leisure encompassed a strong spiritual dimension. Leisure leads to aesthetic, spiritual and intellectual enlightenment through the search for understanding.

From a historical standpoint, the earliest references to leisure were in ancient Athens, where wealthy citizens did not work, but instead were free to engage readily in the study of the arts, literature, philosophy and athletics. For them, leisure, or *schole*, as it is called, was a way of life spent in the pursuit of virtue and civic contribution. It excluded the possibility of work, which was regarded as ignoble and unworthy of the Athenian citizen. Leisure required time for oneself, thus one had to be exempt from the

¹⁰⁵ Lawrence C. Becker and Charlotte B. Becker, "History of Western Ethics" in *Encyclopedia of Ethics* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 493.

rigors of work. John R. Kelly comments that Greek towns were carefully designed to serve leisure needs,

Not only did a central area for markets and government provide a “forum” for discussion and argumentation, but the town plan generally provided parks, baths, theaters, sports arenas, gymnasium and exercise grounds. Added to these were the academies for the learning and practicing of the arts and philosophy and music. Stress was placed on [enabling the free person to] develop both mind and body.¹⁰⁶

Leisure in the ancient Greek society was defined as the contemplation of the higher order virtues of the world: truth, goodness, beauty and knowledge. This high level of contemplation required a life of leisure, *scholē*. *Scholē* was not simply doing, but rather a profound state of peace and creative contemplation in which the spirit became immersed. Only the elite were able to aspire to this higher level of spirituality.

Leisure in Ancient Rome

Ancient Roman society was fascinating in terms of the leisure lifestyles of its citizens. Leisure pursuits and activities tended to be much more utilitarian than in Greek society. The Romans moved beyond the Greek perception of leisure and found *otium*, the time required to rest, recreate, and recuperate in order to return to work. In contrast to Greek times, leisure in Roman times did not signify a social status or a way of life, but a time after productive activities. The Greek ideal was inverted and leisure became a device to support work, work became the end itself. Forms of mass leisure arose during this period through organized athletic competition sponsored by the ruling class for entertainment purposes. This view of leisure as a complement of work is a concept similar to contemporary times.

¹⁰⁶ John R. Kelly, *Leisure* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982), 43-44.

Although activities for the leisure or privileged classes provided entertainment, they were primarily directed toward maintaining the rigor of the young men of this militaristic society. Wealthy Romans surrounded themselves with sculpture, painting and other objects of art. By the 4th century A.D., Rome had more than 1,300 public swimming pools or baths. The leisure activities in which wealthy male Roman citizens participated varied, as evidenced by the following:

Baths were usually preceded by a vigorous workout, where individuals would run, jump, or play a ball game, using an object like a medicine ball. Following this, individuals were provided rooms for games like dice, chess, galleries of paintings and statues and areas where friends might sit and converse, libraries with reading rooms, and halls where a musician, poet might give a recital.¹⁰⁷

Entertainment in Rome was plentiful and inexpensive for the political and social elite. Historians often depict the leisure pursuits of Romans as being hedonistic, vulgar and corrupt. The downfall of Rome has been inextricably tied to the inability of its culture to use its leisure in a positive and productive manner. When faced by the challenges of excesses of wealth, luxury, and time, the Romans responded as a nation by yielding to corruption and losing the simple virtues that had made them strong as a nation. Ancient Rome shows that mass leisure is no new phenomenon. It illustrates leisure in a social context of urbanization and political use of leisure to quiet the masses.

Although both the Greeks and Romans built and planned for mass leisure, the stress was upon law and custom and consumption, a political instrument, as distinct from learning, discovering, enlightenment, and spiritual purposes. Later cultures used the

¹⁰⁷ Christopher R. Edgington, Debra J. Jordan, et.al., *Leisure and Life Satisfaction: Foundational Perspectives* (Dubuque: Brown & Benchmark Publishers, 1995), 59.

example of Rome to show the ill-fated consequences of uncontrolled misuse of leisure.

Leisure for aesthetic and utilitarian purposes may be limited valuable in our society, but leisure that is grounded in a sound theology and sought for spiritual purposes is far better.

Despite of the problems with leisure in Rome, the lifestyle was attractive to some. For example, Augustine, in *Confessions*, related to what he longed for most in 386, undistracted leisure (*securum otium*). What he desired most, prior to his conversion, was time to think deeply about the personal and theological questions which troubled him. Augustine proceeded to go to Cassiciacum where he publicized his life there as a life in *otium*. He immersed himself in the social and literary tradition that stimulated his keen intellectual needs without compromising his social position. Augustine was clear that his new lifestyle would require nothing short of pure leisure (*otium honestum*). He discovered that *otium* was indispensable to study. Augustine concluded that “the proper and complete practice of Christianity required a degree of learning and leisure.”¹⁰⁸ Upon Augustine’s conversion he would later retreat into *otium honestum* and its related values.

Work and Leisure in the Middle Ages

The Dark and Middle Ages that followed the collapse of Rome were marked initially by the disintegration of the legal and military controls that the Romans had established and by the abandonment of many of their advanced practices in agriculture, architecture, industry and law. Throughout Europe, civilization was at a low ebb, with many minor nobles and military leaders claiming power and forming temporary allegiances to control shifting territories.

¹⁰⁸ Dennis E. Trout, “Augustine at Cassiciacum: Otium Honestum and the Social Dimensions of Conversion,” *Vigilae Christianae*, 42, (1988): 136-139.

The Middle Ages in Western Europe linked ancient civilization with modern times; it spanned the years from A.D. 400 to A.D. 1500. The major civilizing force during the Middle Ages was the Christian Church. During this period of time, most areas of Western Europe were divided into feudal states. These feudal states saw a continued social and political hierarchy where large feudal states were managed by lords, and peasants worked the land in support of these individuals.

As in earlier societies, although a doctrine of work was preached, it was largely carried out by serfs or poorly paid craftsmen; typically, lower-class women were assigned “drudge” tasks. In Western Europe during the Middle Ages, there was no word for labor as such, but by the twelfth century it was custom to identify workers (*laboratores*) as one segment of society, along with prayer-sayers (*oratores*), and warriors (*bellatores*).¹⁰⁹ For the masses, leisure came through the church’s “holy”-days and religious festivals. Although the early church abhorred the abuses of leisure by the Roman Empire, it was the excesses and cruelty practiced by the Romans within the context of leisure that the Church sought to avoid and condemn. The Church was not against the basic concept of leisure. Life was to be spent in hard work to meet basic survival needs and in atonement for sin. Periods of leisure were permissible, but were for rest and recuperation. The important precedent was, of course, the foundational belief that God labored for six days and then rested on the seventh. From the beginning of the Church, leisure was closely tied to blocks of time, particularly the Sabbath and a scattering of Holy days (although attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy days of obligation were mandatory for all Christians, they were expected to view Mass as a communal celebration and not as a

¹⁰⁹ Richard G. Kraus. *Leisure In A Changing America: Multicultural Perspectives* (New York: McMillan College Publishing Company, 1994), 26-27.

discretionary responsibility). Gradually over the course of time, the power of the church dwindled and Europe was controlled by powerful monarchs.

Leisure, Christianity and the Reformation

Christians during the Reformation believed that work was good for humankind, and that idleness was not good. Work, framed in the context of being productive, provided a surplus of commodities to share with others. Thus, Christians of this period focused their activities on producing more in order to help those who had less and who needed charity. The Protestant Reformation, spearheaded by Martin Luther, changed the way Christians viewed work and, hence, play. Luther viewed work as being good for people and encouraged individuals to work in order to serve God. Luther did not differentiate between religious work and other types of work. He maintained that religious work was not necessarily superior to other types of work. Work of any type was valued, whereas idleness was viewed as a sin. This value has carried over into contemporary society.

The Puritan or Protestant work ethic built on Luther's basic beliefs. This value or ideological structure promotes the desirability of work and thrift. The Protestant work ethic in United States and Canadian cultures has strongly countered the development of a leisure ethic, and influences the leisure-work guilt phenomenon experienced by many in society today. John Calvin, an influential Protestant theologian, felt that human beings existed to glorify God and help establish God's kingdom on earth. In support of the capitalistic system, Calvin noted that individual should work hard to make a profit so that others could be helped. According to Calvin, the richer a person became, the more

virtuous he or she was.

The period of the Renaissance brought about more freedom for leisure, the Reformation has been shown to have had an even greater effect on Western attitudes. The Reformation was a period which idealized work and distrusted the evils of leisure --a work ethic which has persisted throughout the twentieth and merged into the twenty-first centuries. The Protestant ethic sought to condition leisure to behavior fitting men and women for devotion and work.

Leisure In the Industrial/Modern Age

The advent of the industrial revolution brought on radical increase in work. Leisure was an afterthought. The increasing exploitation of the worker led to a worker movement which forced a decline in hours worked and greater compensation. Incrementally, a time existed that was extracted from the work time. This became known as “disposable” time. Modern leisure comes from this reduction in work time not because leisure is valued but because work has lost some of its value. Consequentially, the critical issue is to not-work, which is a different notion from earlier views of leisure. Leisure has evolved into “blank”, “meaningless” time. Modern leisure has become subordinate to work and should not interfere with work. Pursuant, leisure became the object of consumerism and involved exchange relationships.

Contemporary Paradigms Related to Leisure

There is a conflict among researchers as to where contemporary thought should be on leisure from a sociological and theological perspective. Many pure sociologists

approach the subject from a consumption and social value perspective, while psychologists Seppo Iso-Ahola and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, and sociologists Robert A. Stebbins, John R. Kelly, and Roger E. Mannell champion the concept of optimal experience through leisure. They use varying language, but arrive at consensus in noting that leisure is a source of satisfaction, self-realization, and even a sense of community.¹¹⁰ All are also in agreement that the concept of rest and relaxation as a function of leisure has been grossly neglected in terms of research and scholarly dialogue. There appears to be a longing to make the quantum leap from the psychological and sociological into the theological underpinnings of leisure. While desire may be present, the salient effort to do so is lacking. Perhaps this is a function of a lack of understanding of Christian theological concepts that would bridge and transform the language needed to make the leap.

Douglas Kleiber in his article, *"The Neglect of Relaxation"* refers to the thought of Josef Pieper and his classic work *Leisure: The Basis of Culture*. For Kleiber and others, Pieper's conception of what leisure is from a theological perspective "seems even more elusive as we begin the new century."¹¹¹ For Pieper, leisure is to be founding an attitude of "non-activity" and receptivity: "Leisure is not the attitude of mind of those who actively intervene but of those who are open to everything; not of those who grab and grab hold, but of those who leave the reins loose and who are free and easy themselves."¹¹² Leisure, through the lens of Pieper, is completed in affirmation and celebration, but springs from being truly relaxed. It is a state well beyond idleness and boredom, which lies in the godly comfort of resting in "just being." "As a society, we

¹¹⁰ Douglas A. Kleiber, "The Neglect of Relaxation," *Journal of Leisure Research*, 32, no. 1, (2000): 82.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 83.

celebrate effort and embrace leisure as the catalyst to re-charge that effort. Unfortunately, we have yet to place a supreme value on the necessity of leisure as ‘just being’. For Pieper leisure is a posture of relaxation, of faithful openness to immediate reality and ease of movement and thinking. For Pieper, faith in God is required for true leisure.”¹¹³ This statement by Pieper, which draws in faith, is the point where the line of demarcation is drawn between scholarly social science research and faith. Kleiber states, “Perhaps that is so (the importance of faith as a part of experiencing leisure). But I would argue that disengagement and emotional security would be enough to give leisure meaning and value in our time.”¹¹⁴ The aforementioned statement typifies the separation of camps between the social scientists and theologians when leisure is discussed.

A second mode of contemporary thinking relevant to leisure as a theological concept, relates to the concept of “obligation.” Obligation as a leisure related construct infers that the party involved in a state of leisure, whether activity based or psychological, has a responsibility or duty to engage in leisure to sustain the quality of life. From a theological perspective, obligation requires one to keep a Sabbath, engage in rest, create a balance between work and leisure and use leisure temporally, psychologically and spiritually to commune with, and contemplate upon the goodness of God. Even though this concept is grounded in the disciplines of sociology and psychology it also has theological value. “Obligation is treated both as a state of mind, an attitude—a person feels obligated—and as a form of behavior—a person must carry out a particular course of

¹¹² Josef Pieper, *Leisure the Basis of Culture*, 41.

¹¹³ Kleiber, 83-85.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 85.

action. But even while obligation is substantially mental and behavioral, it roots, too, in the social and cultural world of the obligated actor.”¹¹⁵ People are obligated when they do or refrain from performing an act because they feel bound in this regard by commandment, promise, convention or circumstance.

Robert A. Stebbins, in his article “*Obligation as an Aspect of Leisure*” concludes that the concept of obligation falls into multiple spheres. The “personal” sphere is most germane to this study because it is where we find our religious/spiritual obligations.¹¹⁶ Stebbins notes that obligations in the personal sphere are generally routine. It is in the personal sphere that one places his or her commitment to leisure. Here is where the “leisure ethic” is housed. The relationship between obligation and leisure is not a new area of inquiry. Jeoffrey Dumazedier was one of the first to examine the relationship. He coined the term “semi-leisure” which he used to describe “activities, from the point of view of the individual; arise in the first place from leisure, but which represent in differing degrees the character of obligations.”¹¹⁷ He observed that the lines separating leisure and obligation are often blurry.

Akin to Dumazedier’s thoughts pertaining to obligation and “semi-leisure” is Parker’s five-fold classification of work and leisure. “Parker identifies four types of obligations: those of the job or livelihood, those related to it (e.g. preparing for work and driving to work), those pertaining to existence (e.g., eating, washing, sleeping), and those seen as non-work obligations and semi-leisure (primarily personal obligations). Parker’s

¹¹⁵Robert A. Stebbins, “Obligation as an Aspect of Leisure Experience,” *Journal of Leisure Research*, 32, no. 1, (2000), 152.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 152-153

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 153.

fifth type was leisure itself.”¹¹⁸ Again, our religious/spiritual obligations would coincide with Parker’s fourth and/or fifth types of obligation within his typology.

Lastly, there is a movement afoot to return to the radical roots of leisure in the classical sense. Susana Junnui in her article “Downshifting: Regaining the Essence of Leisure” strongly suggests that the penultimate reason for returning to the basic foundations of leisure is to productively capture time toward the end of personal and spiritual growth. The mechanism to achieve such a laudable goal is “down-shifting.” Simply stated the term suggests that as a society we move away from “materialism” and “consumerism.” Junnui states: “down-shifting does not just mean stop working or stop spending. It means work less, spend less, and doing things differently in a leisurely manner. This concept suggests that conserving in our leisure is a matter of being and doing rather than having.”¹¹⁹

The recovery of leisure starts with asking the hard questions related to our personal and societal priorities and raising the level of consciousness about the value of leisure in our lives. Perhaps, the solution lies in a movement from: “(a) individualism to social solidarity and (b) materialism to spiritualism. The answer lies in education and in the need to strive for balance between work and leisure. Education could help promote personal and spiritual growth. Leisure is not just time away from work; it is a valuable and special time we spend, among other things, understanding and developing our inner-self.”¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Stebbins, 153.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 69.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 72.

Leisure plays the important role of diverting us from the everyday routine of life. It enables and empowers us to give meaning and context to several areas of our lives including work and religious aspirations. There is nothing in the Christian religion that should be hostile toward legitimate states of mind and acts, which constitute being at leisure. Even if the puritanical prejudice against leisure is today somewhat minimized by comparison to what it has been, it lingers on in the superstition that leisure ought to be edifying or educative if Christians are to give them whole-hearted approval. The stark reality is that leisure is an indispensable commodity in the life of all people, whether acknowledged or not.

Historical Aspects of Pastoral Care and Counseling and Care for African Americans

A Brief History of Pastoral Care and Counseling

Pastoral counseling moves beyond the support or encouragement a religious community can offer, by providing psychologically sound therapy that weaves in the religious and spiritual dimension. Religious communities have traditionally sought to provide spiritually-based solutions for those in trouble. Clergy have listened intently to personal problems for centuries, and have cultivated a spiritual counseling response to those who suffer from mental and emotional illness. Traditional spiritual counseling continues to help many of these people. It was recognized long ago, however, that in many cases specialized professional care was necessary for effective treatment.

The intimate link between spiritual and emotional well-being began to receive serious attention more than 50 years ago when the Reverend Anton Boisen, father of the Clinical Pastoral Education movement, placed theological students in supervised contact

with patients in mental hospitals. His innovative educational program brought disciplined training to the historical connection between faith and mental health.

The integration of religion and psychology for psychotherapeutic purposes began in the 1930's with the collaboration of Norman Vincent Peale, a renowned minister, and Smiley Blanton, M.D., a psychiatrist, to form the American Foundation of Religion and Psychiatry, now the Blanton-Peale Institute. Over the years, the role of pastoral counseling has evolved from religious or spiritual counseling to pastoral psychotherapy which integrates theology and the behavioral sciences.

In this awareness of the spiritual dimension in human wholeness, Pastoral Counselors stand in good company. One of Carl Jung's chief contributions as a psychoanalyst and writer was to bring spirituality into psychology. Another influential writer, Abraham Maslow, brought spiritual aspects to therapy. William James, America's most influential early psychologist, studied religious experience as an expression of levels of growth. Psychiatrist Karl Menninger was a pioneer in the integration of the psychological and the theological disciplines because he believed in the "inseparable nature of psychological and spiritual health." M. Scott Peck, best selling author and psychiatrist, effectively expresses that belief in our own day.¹²¹

Demand for spiritually based counseling is on the rise. Indeed, interest in spirituality is on the rise. A recent report, *Religion and the Public Interest*, incorporating the research findings of groups including the Gallup Organization and Lilly Endowment, Inc., reported that 96% of the populations - 285 million Americans - say they believe in

¹²¹ American Association of Pastoral Counselors, "What is Pastoral Counseling." American Association of Pastoral Counselors [webpage on-line]; available from <http://www.aapc.org/history.htm>; Internet; accessed 10 November, 2004.

God. A 1996 *USA Today* survey found that 79% of Americans acknowledge that faith can help recovery from illness. According to another survey, 77% of patients feel their physician should consider their spiritual needs. In a 1994 *Newsweek* poll, 58% of respondents said they feel the need to experience spiritual growth.

Despite increased interest in psychotherapy and increasing numbers of therapists, the advent of managed mental health care has brought a reduction to many people of counseling services available to them. As a result, many people still turn to clergy for help with personal, marital and family issues as well as faith issues. Additionally, many working poor have no insurance benefits at all and need to seek free or low-cost counseling from their pastors.¹²²

African American Pastoral Care

Because of the unique experiences of African Americans within society and religious/spiritual heritage it is vital that pastoral care be done in context. Carroll Watkins-Ali addresses the charge in the following manner:

Strategic pastoral caregiving in the African American context must provide strategies that address the survival and liberation issues of African Americans. Therefore, it has already been established that the functions of ministry in the African American context need to be expanded beyond the traditional views of ministry as *healing*, *sustaining*, and *guiding* to include aspects that are *nurturing*, *empowering*, and *liberating*. The aspect of *reconciling* is also reconsidered as a strategic concept for the pastoral care of African Americans.¹²³

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Watkins-Ali, 135.

Watkins-Ali embraces the guidelines offered by Seward Hiltner toward caregiving with “an attitude of tender and solicitous concern.”¹²⁴ Additionally, Watkins-Ali suggests that the first and second orders of business for pastoral care are to approach each concern with an attitude of urgency and then provide advocacy that is embodied in action.¹²⁵ The general idea is that those providing care for African American congregants must treat their concerns as legitimate and assist action-oriented solutions.

Edward P. Wimberly in *African American Pastoral Care* also illuminates the need for contextualized pastoral care. Wimberly advocates for the narrative approach to pastoral care in which personal stories from the life, ministry of the caregiver and the Bible are utilized to help individuals and families visualize how and where God is at work in their lives and thereby receive healing wholeness.¹²⁶ Despite the inherent dangers of revealing the personal details of the caregivers life and the potential for de-valuing professional training as a caregiver the technique is useful. The “eschatological plot” encased in this method calls the Christian to faith because each must participate in life and in God’s unfolding story, knowing that things will work out in the end. The eschatological plot is vitally important because it does not succumb to suffering and oppression, nor does it give suffering and oppression the final word. This method is liberating in its own right because it has the potential to generate hope and action toward resolution of the difficulty.¹²⁷ Wimberly also notes that this narrative approach is useful in helping congregants move beyond key transitional periods or “life crises” which

¹²⁴ Ibid., 136-137.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Edward P. Wimberly, *African American Pastoral Care* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1991), 9.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 14

present an array of challenges. Using a goal oriented model can facilitate faith driven action.¹²⁸

Contextualized caregiving and counseling are important toward helping African American congregants wrestle with both personal and biblical perspectives about work and leisure. In light of the unique attitudes about work and the staunch traditional views about salvation and leisure developing an appropriate biblically based perspective can be enlightening and liberating. Personal narratives and biblical examples related to work and leisure are helpful tools in helping the individual move toward wholeness and abundant living.

Pastoral Care and Counseling in the African American Baptist Church

African American churches generally have a rich history of caring for its congregants. The two churches that I have served in my ministerial career are both members of the oldest and largest African American Baptist denomination, the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc. The church has been a “safety net” for African Americans since the time of slavery. Pastors have literally and figuratively taken on the role of the “Good Shepherd” (Jn 10:7-15), caring for the social, cultural, economic, and spiritual well-being of parishioners. Pastoral care in the African American tradition was and remains a tool to facilitate the survival of congregants and the community. Despite the fact that there are no tangible historical ties to formal, structured pastoral care and counseling, it is implied that the African American Baptist churches informally provide pastoral care for members. The counseling aspect of the discipline has remained non-existent or under-developed in the majority of African American Baptist churches.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 49-53.

The National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. placed in the *New National Baptist Hymnal* the *Church Covenant*. This document contains many high ideal which are grounded in scripture that serve to guide the lives of individuals, families, the local church and the denomination in caring for one another individually and corporately. There are significant sections of the Covenant which addresses conduct relative to caring for individuals and families. Note the following:

We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together In Christian love ... We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion ... We further engage to watch over, to pray for, to exhort and stir up each other unto every good word and work; to guard each other's reputation, not needlessly exposing the infirmities of others; to participate in each other's joys, and with tender sympathy bear one another's burdens and sorrows ...¹²⁹

As previously noted these high ideals are laudable but have limits. Time, training, liability, and the sheer level of suffering within individuals and the congregation on the whole are definite constraints. One of the great challenges to the African American Baptist Church in this decade and beyond is to bridge the gap between preaching that is healing in nature and the provision of professional care-giving and counseling to congregants. Despite the covenantal relationship as noted in the Church Covenant, there is a need to move beyond basic care-giving counseling to pastoral care services that are more clinical within the congregational context.

One of the key texts that the Holy Spirit has written on the table of the investigator's heart is John 10:7-15. Specifically, John 10:10-11 (NCV) has given my work in the area of pastoral care and counseling added context. The powerful words of Jesus: "A thief comes to steal and kill and destroy, but I came to give life -- life in all its

¹²⁹ T.B. Boyd, III, Church Covenant in *The New National Baptist Hymnal* (Nashville: National Baptist Publishing Board, 1977), vii.

fullness. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep” have helped me to personalize each counseling encounter. The researcher’s goal has been and continues to be, to help those who are suffering find their way back to the abundant or “full” life as promised by our Savior.

Summary

Our theology insists that we are created in the image of God—*Imago Dei*—(Gen 1:26-27), therefore we must earnestly attempt at all times to live in a manner that reflects our position. God worked, created (Gen 1:1-31), rested and took a Sabbath (Gen 2:1-2), thus we must do also. Made in the image of God, and as followers of Christ our perpetual task is to imitate Christ—*imitatio Christi*—(Eph 5:1). As Christ labored (Lk 4:18-19), rested (Mk 6:45-47), observed a Sabbath (Mt 12:1-8), played and enjoyed life (Jn 2:1-11), and lastly advocated for leisure to find the delicate balance needed to sustain self (Mk 6:30-32), we must also do so.

Upon completion of the discussion regarding essential terms, theological constructs and the biblical, theological, and historical concerns related to the ministry project, the researcher proceeds to Chapter Four- Methodology.

CHAPTER FOUR

STUDY METHODOLOGY

Having discussed the essential terms and theoretical warrants, the design and implementation of the research endeavor is the next topic of discussion. This chapter describes the purposes of the study, research questions and hypotheses, theoretical models, instrumentation, implementation protocol, methods of data analysis and validation of research efforts.

Purposes of the Ministry Project

Withstanding the information presented in the three previous chapters and to provide direction to the research endeavor, the purposes of this study were fourfold:

1. To examine perceptions among Christians on the work, rest, Sabbath, time, leisure, and traditional views of the church on leisure.
2. To aid a small group of congregants in discovering their belief about the aforementioned topics and empower them to develop beliefs that are consistent with the scripture.
3. Through teaching, reflection, individual and group discussion, move toward changing detrimental behaviors relative to work, rest, Sabbath, time, and leisure.

4. Compile data, and through appropriate quantitative and qualitative methods toward the end of developing a theologically based work and leisure ethic.

Withstanding the aforementioned purposes of this study, research questions, operational definitions, hypotheses, research design, measurement protocol, and instrumentation are discussed in the following sections. Additionally, theoretical models which are relevant to understanding the research question, hypotheses, and overall research effort are presented in this section.

Operational Definitions

To facilitate the development of questions in the survey instrument, more accurately measure key constructs, and focus writing efforts a series of operational definitions were developed for use in this study. A glossary of terms is contained in the back matter of this document.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Presented in this section are the research questions and hypotheses which grew out of the primary questions of inquiry.

Research Questions

Catalyzing this research effort were two important questions which had a direct bearing on the research design. Each question is supported by scripture and literature from multiple disciplines. Note the pertinent research questions below:

1. Do individual and congregational beliefs about work, Sabbath, time, and leisure influence attitudes, behaviors, and choices about leisure pursuits?
2. Is there a relationship between bible-based leisure counseling, as an intervention, and the transformation of individual beliefs and behaviors relative to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure?

Subsequent to the limitations of both action and social science research, the limitations and delimitations of the study are presented below.

Study Limitations and Delimitations

Delimitations

This research endeavor, in its two phases, was delimited to a sample population comprised of congregants of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, located in Dayton, Ohio. The church is predominately African American, and is associated with the National Baptist Convention, USA Inc. The primary prerequisite for inclusion in the sample was holding active membership in the church at the time the sampling frame for the project was developed. Active membership was defined as any congregant who made a monetary contribution to the church totaling ten dollars or more during a ninety day period. Individuals whose contributions were documented were then placed on the “Active membership List” of the church.

Limitations

The following limitations may have impacted the results of the study directly indirectly:

1. Due to the nature of action research and the utilization of a single congregation as the object of inquiry, the results have limited generalizability.
2. The sample was relatively small and the sampling methodology potentially will impact both reliability and validity of the study.
3. Some of the respondents may not have been fully truthful in their responses to questions contained in the instruments.
4. The sample population may not be truly representative of churches in general and African American Baptist congregations specifically.

As a function of the aforementioned research questions, study limitations and delimitations, a series of hypotheses were developed to assist in testing the research questions. The following section presents the hypotheses used in the study.

Hypotheses

For the purpose of testing the research question, beyond anecdotal observation, the researcher developed and tested the following hypotheses:

- H₁ Among the study population, there is no difference in Sabbath Beliefs and Practices Scores (SBPS) between congregants with less than ten years of church membership and congregants with ten or more years of church membership.
- H₂ Among the study population, there is no difference in Beliefs About Time Scores (BATS) between congregants that are active in a church ministry and those that are not active in a church ministry.

- H₃ Among the study population, there is no difference in Work Ethic Scores (WES) based on the income levels of congregants.
- H₄ Among the study population, there is no difference in Theological Beliefs About Work Scores (TBAWS) between congregants based on occupational category.
- H₅ Among the study population, there is no difference in Leisure Ethic Scores (LES) between congregants under age forty and those above age forty.
- H₆ Among the study population, there is no difference in Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scores (TBALS) between congregants under age forty and those above age forty.
- H₇ Among the study population, there is no difference in Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scores (RBALS) between congregants with less than ten years of church membership and congregants with ten or more years of church membership.
- H₈ Among the sub-sample that participated in bible-based leisure counseling, there is no difference in pre-test and post-test scores when the Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scale is administered.

Each of the aforementioned hypotheses were grounded in scripture, observation of individual and congregational behaviors relative to the subject matter, and the review of literature.

Toward the end of strengthening the reliability and validity of the study, several theoretical models were reviewed to frame the context of the study. In the following pages models are presented and summarized.

Theoretical Models Related to the Research Effort

This section provides an examination of related theoretical and theological models related to leisure. Also in this section, a theological model for leisure is developed.

There are two key theoretical models relating to leisure that are important to this study. The first is the “Optimal Experience Model”, more commonly known as “Flow Theory, developed by psychologist Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi. The second is the “Stanton-Rich/Iso-Ahola Burnout Model” created by psychologists Howard Stanton Rich and Seppo E. Iso-Ahola, of the University of the Department of Kinesiology, University of Maryland. Both models are useful in explaining the value of leisure in the lives of Christians, but also aid in the development of a functional model for Christian leisure. An additional inherent value of each is that they both can aid the client in the efforts toward self-actualization.

Optimal Experience Theory

In studies conducted by Csikszentmihalyi, it was discovered that every flow activity, whether it involved competition or chance or any other dimension of experience, had the following in common: It provided a sense of discovery, a creative feeling of transporting the person into a new reality. It pushed the person to a higher level of performance, and led to previously undreamed-of states of consciousness. In essence, it transformed the self by making it more complex. In this growth of the self lies the capacity to improve one’s quality of life. Enjoyment is a crucial part of well-being. It is an often-neglected aspect of human motivation. One of the critical facets of enjoyment is the “flow experience.” The self becomes more complex as a result of experiencing flow.

“Paradoxically, it is when we act freely, for the sake of the action itself rather than for ulterior motives, that we learn to become more than what we were. When we chose a goal and invest ourselves in to the limits of our concentration, whatever we do will be enjoyable.”¹ Csikszentmihalyi indicates that once the enjoyment is experienced, the tendency is to attempt to repeat the experience.

In his initial article linking flow with optimal experience, Csikszentmihalyi defines optimal experience as “an ordered state of consciousness where a person’s perception of what there is to do (challenges) and what one is capable of doing (skills) are equal.”² Flow can be measured either subjectively or objectively utilizing either quantitative or qualitative measures. The early work of Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1988) specify that the primary dimensions of flow are as follows:

1. intense involvement;
2. clarity of goals and feedback;
3. deep concentration;
4. transcendence of self;
5. lack of self-consciousness;
6. loss of time;
7. intrinsically rewarding experience;
8. a balance between skill and challenge.³

¹ Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York: HarperPerrenial, 1990), 42.

² John T. Hayworth, *Work, Leisure and Well-Being* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 83.

³ Ibid., 85.

The balance between skill and challenge is seen as a necessary prerequisite for flow and is underscored by Csikszentmihalyi in the following statement:

“... Concentration is so intense that there is not attention left over to think about anything irrelevant or to worry about problems. Self-conscious disappears, and the sense of time becomes distorted. An activity that produces such experiences is so gratifying that people are willing to do it for its own sake, with little concern for what they will get out of it or even when it is difficult or dangerous.”⁴

Csikszentmihalyi notes that “a warm feeling of closeness to others” is important in some experiences that are autoletic (impacted by situational conditions) in nature, and that this is similar to the state which has been called *communitas* seen in certain religious rituals, feasts or initiation rites. In the flow state it is considered that “action follows upon action according to an internal logic that seems to need no conscious intervention by the actor. The party expresses it as a unified flowing from one moment to the next in which the individual is in control of their actions, and in which there is little differentiation between self and environment, between stimulus and response, between past and future. Flow, it is considered, can be obtained in almost any activity. This includes those of a spiritual and religious nature such as prayer and worship.

Csikszentmihalyi outlines the experience of flow or optimal experience in six fundamental dimensions. First, flow is the merging of action and awareness. A person in flow is aware of his or her actions but not of the awareness itself. By paying individual attention to the task, one cannot reflect on the act itself. When awareness becomes split,

⁴ Ibid.

then flow is interrupted. Flow occurs only when tasks are within one's ability to perform, which is why flow often occurs in activities with clearly established patterns.⁵

The integration of action and awareness are made possible by the second dimension of flow experiences: a centering of attention on a limited stimulus field. One must ignore all external stimuli, which may potentially distract the individual from achieving the state of flow. A third feature of how flow experiences can be described is the "loss of ego", "self-forgetfulness", "loss of self-consciousness" and even "transcendence of individuality and fusion with the world." Activities, which facilitate flow typically, do not require negotiation. This does not imply that the individual experiencing flow loses touch with reality; it involves simply a loss of consciousness of self.⁶

A fourth dimension of flow is that a person perceives his or herself as in control of their actions and environment. The individual has no active awareness of control but is simply not worried by the possible lack of control. It is vitally important to note that this point posed by Csikszentmihalyi is controversial on the grounds that some argue that the individual is not psychologically attempting to control their environment. The fifth quality of the flow experience is that it typically contains coherent, non-contradictory demands for action and provides clear, unambiguous feedback to a person's actions. This is feasible because one's awareness is limited to a restricted field of possibilities.⁷ Csikszentmihalyi stresses that in flow one does not stop to evaluate the feedback instead,

⁵ Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow*, 43-72.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety: Experiencing Flow in Work and Play* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1975), 47.

“action and reaction have become so well practiced as to be automatic. The person is too involved with the experience to reflect on it.... The flow experience differs from awareness in everyday reality because it contains ordered rules, which make action and the evaluation of action automatic and hence unproblematic. When contradictory actions are made possible, the self reappears to negotiate between the conflicting definitions of what needs to be done, and the flow is interrupted.”⁸

A sixth feature of flow is its “autoletic” nature: it appears to need goals or rewards external to itself.⁹ The inherent purpose is to remain in the state of flow.

Csikszentmihalyi concludes:

The various elements of flow experience are linked together and dependent upon each other. By limiting the stimulus field, a flow activity allows people to concentrate their actions and ignore distractions. As a result, they feel in potential control of the environment. Because flow activity has clear and non-contradictory rules, people who perform in it can temporarily forget their identity and its problems. The result of these conditions is that one finds the process intrinsically rewarding.¹⁰

Autoletic activities need not be active in the physical sense, but can also be “passive” and found in activities such as reading, fellowshiping with others and meditating. Most flow experiences are a combination of autoletic (activities done for internal reasons) and extoletic (activities done for external reasons only).

Since the development of the model in 1975, Csikszentmihalyi and others have improved upon the theory and functionality related to the model. The model has a wide range of applications across disciplines, inclusive of theology. Of particular interests in the area of theology are both “autoletic” and “extoletic” applications of flow. Presented below as figures 1 and 2 are graphic presentations of the “Optimal Experience” or “Flow

⁸ Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow*, 43-72.

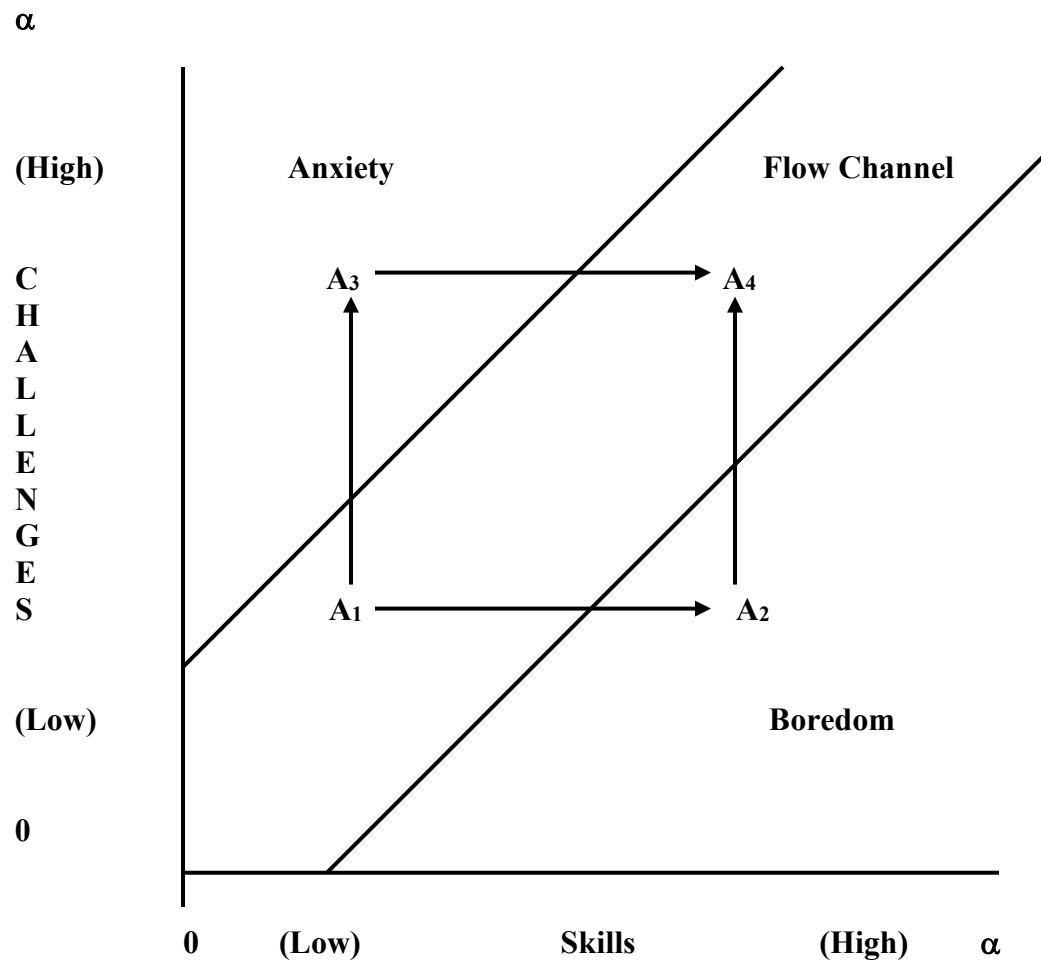
⁹ Csikszentmihalyi, *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety*, 48.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Model” as developed by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. The significant implications for usage in theology and this study are presented in subsequent discussion beyond presentation of the models.

The Flow Model also compliments both the TLC Model of leisure counseling (Loesch and Wheeler, 1982) and the Rogerian approach to counseling which emphasizes self actualization. As a client, or congregant, experiences the positive aspects of the leisure experiences, then the possibility of finding joy in the experience increases incrementally. There is less inclination to be bound by implied rules of religious dogma and tradition-based constraints to leisure participation. Optimally, the flow experience will facilitate a greater appreciation for the “gift” of leisure. Figure 1. depicts Csikszentmihalyi’s Optimal Experience (Flow) Model.

Figure 1: Optimal Experience Model



The model operationalizes in a fairly simplistic manner. The two theoretically most significant dimensions of the experience, challenges and skills, are represented on the two axes of the diagram. As “A” representing the individual who is entering into a passive or active leisure pursuit. The diagram shows the individual at four different points in time. At point A_1 , the participant has little skill and is facing a sizeable challenge in the activity. The task at hand may not be very difficult and perhaps is just right to accommodate flow. The individual does not stay at this point long and keeps practicing to improve his/her skill level. As skills improve, the challenge lessens and boredom sets in

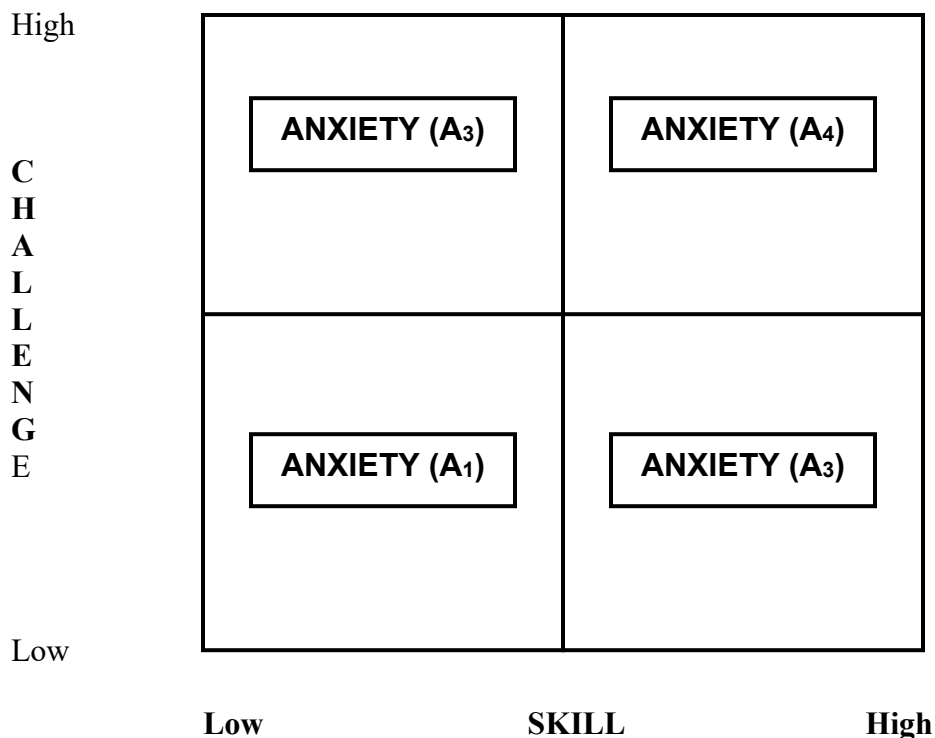
at point A₂. Perhaps a partner is brought into the activity and there may be a realization that there are much more difficult challenges within the activity, thus anxiety (A₃) concerning performance takes place.

Neither boredom nor anxiety will be motivated to return to the flow state. To move beyond boredom there is only one essential choice, that being to increase the challenge. By setting a new and more challenging goal that matches the level of skill, the party can proceed into the flow state again (A₄). If the individual is anxious (A₃), the way back to flow requires that there is an increase in the skill level. Theoretically, the challenges to be faced can be reduced, and thus return to flow where the party began (in A₁), but in practice it is difficult to ignore challenges once one is aware that they exist.

The diagram shows that both A₁ and A₄ represent situations in which the individual is in flow. Even though both are enjoyable, the two states are unique in that A₄ is a more complex experience than A₁. It is more complex due to the fact that it requires a superior challenge, and demands heightened levels of skills from the individual. But A₄, although complex and enjoyable, does not portray a stable situation either. As the individual continues to practice whatever pursuit he/she is engaged in, the party will become bored by lesser opportunities found at that level, or will become anxious and perhaps frustrated by their relatively low ability. The motivation to enjoy one's self again will push the party back into the flow channel, but now at a level of complexity even higher than A₄. Relevant examples related to the application of this model for spiritual/religious purposes would be prayer and worship.

Figure 2 represents an alternative model to the original "Flow Model" represented at Figure 1. The two models theoretically function in the same manner.

Figure 2.- Four Channel Flow Model



Theological Implications

There appear to be a number of pertinent applications for the Optimal Experience Model in the area of religion and spirituality. First, the model suggests a basic formula for Christians to enter into a higher state of leisure, beyond simple relaxation. This model suggests that one can enter a state of peace and calmness if one is able to enter the “flow channel.” This channel represents the zone where the challenge of entering the state of leisure and the skill required to do so intersect. Often there are eternal forces such as family, work, personal burdens, church related anxieties, which hinder our capacity to relax and enjoy leisure.

Second is the possibility that the “flow experience” can enhance our spiritual lives by permitting us to be at maximum efficiency when partake in “*lectio divina*” – the spiritual practice of *lectio, meditatio, oratio, and contemplatio*. As Marjorie J. Thompson indicates in *Soul Feast*, “the dance of *lectio divina* may leave our natural energies drained or replenished, but when practiced faithfully it leads to a deeper knowledge of God and ourselves in relation to God in this world.”¹¹ It is in the quiet recesses of “holy leisure” that *lectio divina* is practiced. An understanding of the entering into the flow state may also heighten our awareness of the Holy Spirit working in our lives as we actively or passively engage in the adoration and worship of God, alone or in a formal corporate worship environment. Through the “flow experience” transcendence to a higher level of adoration, praise and worship may be found.

Third, if the Christian is able to operationalize the flow experience in his or her life, then there remains the possibility that the individual will have a greater appreciation for leisure and the experience of leisure. As one enjoys leisure the inclination is to seek additional opportunities for leisure. This increased level of enjoyment can lead to transformed attitudes and behaviors relative to leisure. It may also contribute to spiritual and theological growth in the individual by means of a heightened awareness of the personal and theological value of leisure itself. A positive flow experience invariably may cast light on leisure as a “gift from God”, rather than a by-product of society’s management of the clock. Additionally, there lies the potential for a greater appreciation for Sabbath-keeping, rest, quiet time and “holy leisure” all which can be found within the context of leisure and the “flow experience.”

¹¹ Marjorie M. Thompson, *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 24.

A final important implication and application of the flow model is burnout prevention among clergy and others involved in Christian service. The crucial factor is that the constructive and holy use of leisure must become part of one's "daily discipline." The Stanton-Rich/Iso-Ahola Burnout Model, featured in the next section describes how attitudes, behaviors and practices related to work and leisure play a major role in the burnout of clergy persons. Experiencing the flow of leisure can produce healthy work practices and aid in moving clergy toward balanced life styles where work and leisure are complementary. It may also serve to aid the clergy person in appropriating a "healthy balance" between active and passive forms of leisure. While active forms of leisure may be good for the body and human spirit, passive leisure may serve to restore, renew, refresh and re-create the soul.

Stanton-Rich/Iso-Ahola Model – Burnout in Clergy Persons

Howard M. Stanton-Rich and Seppo E. Iso-Ahola of the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Maryland developed a model to address the underlying causes of burnout among clergy persons. In their research effort, they concluded that one reason clergy fall victim to burnout is the lack of balance in their lives. Particularly, there is a sorely lacking balance of work and leisure. Missing from their lives are appropriate "time-out behaviors" or leisure activities, which serve to ward off, unwanted stressors.

These "leisure buffers" can turn around the adverse effects of stress on mental and physical health. The authors define burnout as a psychological construct that is defined as "a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do "people work" or some kind."

They denote that burnout begins with emotional exhaustion, moves to depersonalization and then progresses to feelings of hopelessness that is the result one some sense of reduced personal accomplishment.¹²

The key variables within this model suggest that age, gender, marital status, education, years in service, and years in the present job contributed directly or indirectly to burnout among clergy, through their effects on leisure behavior, satisfaction, attitude, and self-determination. Additionally, they addressed the question whether leisure behavior, satisfaction, attitude, and self-determination are associated with burnout.¹³

Stanton-Rich and Iso-Ahola selected clergy as the sample population of this study for two important reasons. First, they surmised that clergy are very susceptible to burnout due to long hours, and because of the physical and psychological demands of ministry. Second, such as the setting of unrealistic goals, tenuous time constraints, and the problem of role overload, ambiguity, and responsibility as part of the rationale for selecting this group. Some of their major findings include the following:

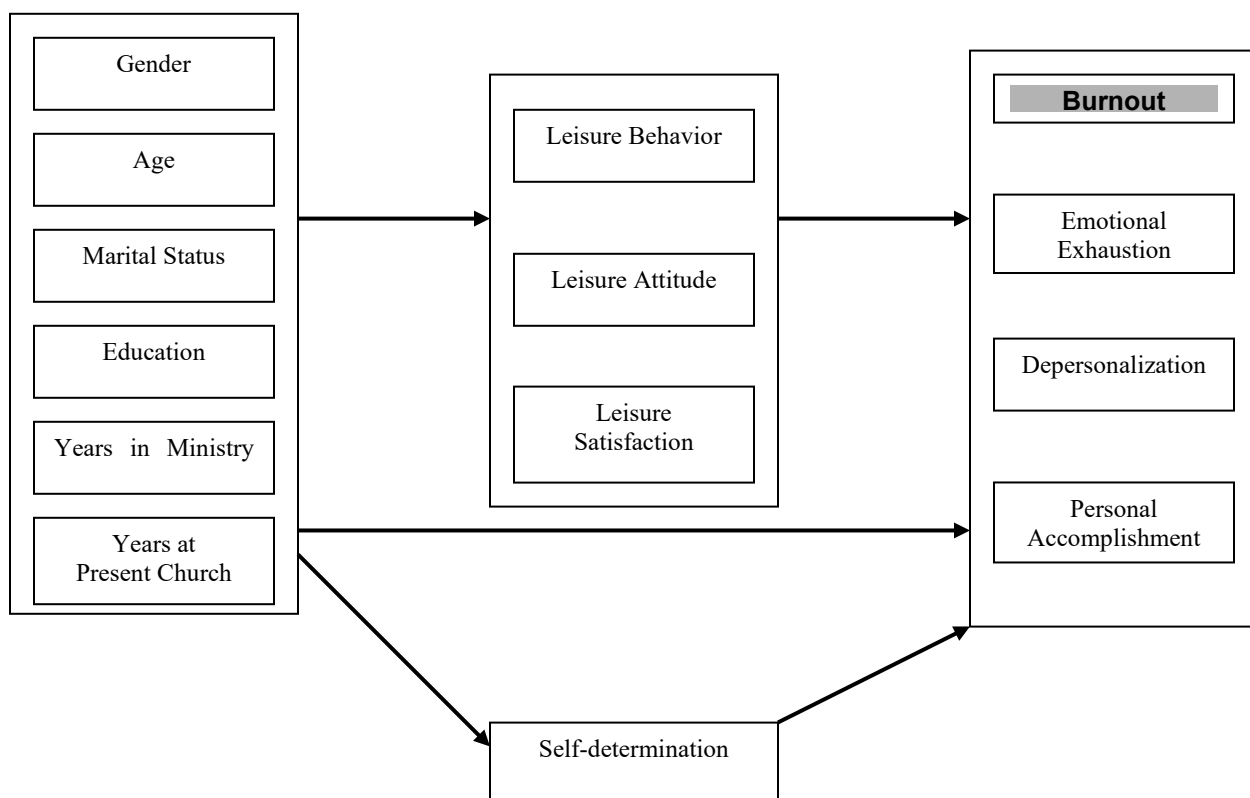
1. Leisure behavior and leisure satisfaction had a significant (inverse) direct effect on all three factors of burnout. Thus, the higher the leisure behavior and leisure satisfaction, the lower the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization.
2. Engagement in satisfying leisure behaviors and self-determined activities reduces burnout.
3. There is a need for a “leisure policy” among clergy to promote the healthy use of leisure time and leisure pursuits as a prevention measure.¹⁴

¹² Stanton-Rich and Iso-Ahola, 1932.

¹³ Ibid., 1933.

This study validates the assumption that the constructive use of leisure in its many dimensions can be a tremendous asset to those in ministry. The functional theoretical model and its implications for ministry are further discussed in the paragraphs below.

Figure 3. Stanton-Rich and Iso-Ahola Path Model for the Hypothesized Relationships Among Demographic Variables, Leisure Variables, Self-Determination, and Burnout



Theological Implications & Usefulness to Applied Ministry

One of the most profound implications for ministry that can be obtained from this model is the need for Sabbath-keeping. The model and findings of the study indicate that clergy must partition off “holy time” within their busy schedules for the purpose of physical rejuvenation and spiritual renewal. Having a working understanding of how the

¹⁴ Ibid., 1945-1947.

theological constructs of Sabbath, rest, time, work and leisure operationalize within day-today living is crucial to the physical, psycho-emotional, and spiritual “well-being” of the individual.

Another subsequent implication relates to the need for encouraging a balance between work and leisure in ministry. Each area is equally important, but the realization is that when one is given more emphasis than the other, problems occur. Perhaps continuing education related to a functional understanding of both work and leisure is a viable remedy. Lastly, what this model and the findings of the research conducted by Stanton-Rich and Iso-Ahola direct our attention to the need to retreat periodically, especially on the part of long tenured clergy who have served in the same parish for an extended period of time. The New Testament cites multiple examples of times when Jesus withdrew from the rigors of ministry toward the end of renewal. If the “servants are not greater than the master”, then perhaps this healthy practice needs to be encouraged for clergy across denominations and ministry settings. The critical concern is that clergy must learn to value leisure in both theological and pragmatic terms.

Based on the biblical, theological, and historical underpinnings related to the project, subsequent review of literature, formation of the research question and hypotheses, and the review of pertinent theoretical models, the project intervention was developed. The following section provides an overview of the ministry project.

Intervention

The primary intent of this research effort was to actively engage congregants as co-researchers and subjects. Each individual brings value to this project in its various

phases. As Davydd J. Greenwood and Morten Levin indicate in *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change*, “action research is based on the affirmation that all human being have detailed, complex, and valuable knowledge about their lives, environment, and goals. This knowledge is different from scholarly knowledge because everyday knowledge is embodied in people’s actions and the way they reflect on them. This kind of knowledge is different from conventional knowledge because practical wisdom and practical reasoning are its central characters.”¹⁵ Action research enjoins the worlds of pragmatism and scientific inquiry.

Research conducted in this endeavor transpired in two critical phases. Phase I of the project involved a congregational survey, administered through a written questionnaire. The instrument was designed to ascertain beliefs about work, rest, Sabbath, time and leisure. Additionally, congregants were asked to gauge their personal beliefs about designated leisure activities and the source of their belief.

The second phase of this research endeavor involved individual and group counseling with eight members of the sample over a three-month period. Each participant was issued a series of teaching notes on four topics and a series of open-ended written “Reflection/Action” questions for which short written responses were provided. Upon receipt of the responses, an individual counseling session to discuss the data and then a group counseling session was held to discuss the teaching notes and present comments. Individual counseling sessions were conducted in person or by telephone based on the needs and time constraints of the participant.

¹⁵ Davydd J. Greenwood and Morten Levin, *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change* (Thousand Oak: Sage, 1998), 109.

Individual counseling sessions occurred on Saturday, December 18, 2005 and Saturday, January 15, 2006. Small group meetings were held on Saturday, December 4, 2005 and Saturday, January 8, 2006. Individual counseling sessions occurred Saturday, December 18, 2005 and Saturday, January 15, 2006. The original intent of this segment of the intervention was to conduct three individual and three group counseling sessions. Due to time constraints on the part of both the researcher and members of the counseling group, as previously noted, we were only able to generate two individual and group sessions.

Project Management- Phase I- Congregational Survey

Development of the Study Instrument

The instrument features five major sections. Section one was designed to solicit the respondent's perceptions related to the Christian Sabbath. This section contains two parts. In Part A, respondents were asked to assign a measure of strength of agreement using a five point Likert-scale, which ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree", on biblical statements related to the Sabbath and related practices. In Part B of Section I, again respondents is asked to assign a measure of agreement ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" on statements related to time. A five point Likert-scale is used.

Section II seeks to assess the respondent's beliefs about work. This section also contains two key sub-sections. Part A measured the respondent's general attitudes related to work. Respondents were asked to assign a measure of strength of agreement ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," utilizing a seven point Likert-scale.

The original scale was developed and used with a seven point scale, therefore for the sake of consistency the same scale was utilized in the instrument designed for this study. In Part B, respondents were asked to assign a measure of strength of agreement ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, using a five point Likert-scale. Theological statements related to beliefs about work are used to elicit responses. The cumulative scores from both sub-sections of Section II were combined to create a Composite Work Beliefs Score (CWBS) for each respondent.

Section III seeks to assess the respondent’s beliefs about leisure. This section contained two key sub-sections. Part A measured the respondent’s general attitudes related to leisure. Respondents were asked to assign a measure of strength of agreement, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, utilizing a five point Likert-scale. In Part B, respondents is asked to assign a measure of strength of agreement which ranged from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree,” using a five point Likert-scale. Theological statements related to beliefs about leisure are used to evoke responses. The cumulative scores from both sub-sections of Section II were combined to create a Composite Leisure Beliefs Score (CLBS) for each respondent.

Section IV is designed to allow the respondents to respond to statements about various leisure activities and what they believe church tradition suggests about them. Respondents were asked to assign a measure of strength of agreement, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree,” utilizing a five point Likert-scale. In Part B, respondents is asked to assign a measure of strength of agreement which range from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree,” using a five point Likert-scale. Statements regarding activities that have drawn the attention of the local church and the Christian

community (i.e.- idleness, drinking alcoholic beverages, dancing, etc.) is used to generate responses. An RBAL (Religious Beliefs About Leisure) score is developed for each respondent based on the sum of their responses.

Section V is designed to collect demographic information about the respondents. This section requires the respondents to provide information related to gender, clergy status, race/ethnicity, age, denomination, involvement in ministry, marital status, income, educational attainment, and hours dedicated to work and leisure. In closing this section, respondents were urged to provide their perceptions about whether the church should do more teaching on the topics of work, rest (physical and spiritual) Sabbath, time, leisure and tradition-based thoughts relative to work and leisure. Respondents were then asked to assign a measure of importance of each topic, using a numerical rating of “1- not important” to “5- very important.”

Protestant Work Ethic Scale

To measure the respondents perceptions related to work, the Protestant Work Ethic (PWE) scale is utilized. The authors interpret the Protestant Work Ethic as a dispositional variable characterized by a belief in the importance of hard work and frugality, which acts as a defense against factors such as sloth, sensuality, sexual temptation, and religious doubt.¹⁶ There are multiple versions of this scale (Goldstein & Eichorn, 1961; Mirels & Garrett, 1971; Hammond & Williams, 1976; Buchholz, 1978,

¹⁶ John D. Cook, Susan J. Hepworth, Toby D. Wall and Peter B. Warr, *The Experience of Work: A Compendium and Review of 249 Measures and Their Use* (New York: Academic Press, 1981), 141.

Ray, 1982; Ho, 1984).¹⁷ The instrument best suited for this study is the version developed by Mirels and Garrett (1961). This version contains six coding categories: (1) work as an end in itself; (2) hard work and success; (3) leisure; (4) money and efficiency; (5) spiritual /religious; and (6) morals. Each of the aforementioned sub-scales within the instrument were of great value to data analysis in this investigation. Of particular interest to this study are the “work as an end to itself,” “leisure,” and “spiritual/religious” subscales.

The scale contains 19 items and three sub-scales. It uses a seven point Likert-type response scale, “agree-disagree.” Within the scale, there is no intermediate or mid-point marker utilized. It is scored 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 respectively. Three items in the scale are reverse scored (items 9, 13 and 15). The scale is both reliable (Spearman-Brown, .67; Kuder Richardson, .79; Cronbach, .70) and valid (concurrent).¹⁸ Utilization of a reliable and valid scale was crucial because Protestant Work Ethic values are held by both individuals and groups.

Leisure Ethic Scale

The Leisure Ethic Scale appearing in Part A of Section III was developed by Buchholz in 1977. It is one of five sub-scales contained in the “Beliefs About Work” Instrument. The presupposition behind the development of this scale was that individuals regard work as a means to personal fulfillment through its provision of the means to pursue leisure activities.¹⁹ Items contained within the sub-scale are scored one to five,

¹⁷ Adrian Furnham, “A Content, Correlational, and Factor Analysis Study of Seven Questionnaire Measures of the Protestant Work Ethic,” *Human Relations*, 43, no. 1 (1990): 389.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 385.

with possible responses ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” One item within the scale is reversed (item 1). Even though data pertaining to the reliability and validity of the sub-scale was not available, the content of items contained within the sub-scale was of value to the construction of the instrument. The Leisure Ethic scale, in modified form (Crandall and Slivken, 1978, Buchholz, 1978) has been used repeatedly in various types of leisure research.²⁰

Pilot Testing of the Survey Instrument

After construction of the instrument, pilot testing will take place. The questionnaire was pilot tested in early June 2005. A draft of the questionnaire was given to twenty people who worked in city government in Dayton, Ohio; colleagues working in five universities across the country; and to neighbors who live in direct proximity of the investigator. None of the individuals who pilot tested the instrument were included in the sample. After the instruments are returned, modifications in wording and sequencing of questions were made based on the feedback obtained from members of the pilot sample. The questionnaire was then disseminated.

Development of the Sampling Plan/Selection of Subjects

Due to the fact that this research effort was not funded externally and the fact that time and survey administration were strong considerations, a stratified convenience sample was utilized. Stratification of the sample was done by the variables of gender, age

¹⁹ Cook, Hepworth, Wall and Warr, 141.

²⁰ Seppo E. Iso-Ahola, *Social Psychological Perspectives on Leisure and Recreation* (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1980), 270-271.

cohort, employment status, length of membership, education, and status in ministry work. It was determined that a sample of 100 was manageable and would lead to generalizable results. Also, within a sample of the aforementioned size, the impacts of spoiled questionnaires would be minimal.²¹ The sampling frame was Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church's "Active Membership" list as of June 30, 2005. The sample was designed to be heterogeneous across study variables.

Survey Administration and Data Collection

A stratified convenience sample of 100 congregants whose name appeared on the Active Church Membership List in June 2005 was drawn. To accurately reflect the composition of the congregation, stratification was done based on age, gender, race, length of membership in the church, employment status, and involvement in one or more church ministries.

Prior to distribution of the instrument, each congregant was told by the researcher or one of the Context Associates about the purpose of the study to seek their consent to participate. The names of those who chose to participate were then highlighted on the Active Membership List. With the assistance of Context Associates, one hundred questionnaires were distributed to congregants that consented to take part in the study. Questionnaires were distributed prior to the Sunday School period and collected immediately afterward on Sunday, August 21, 2005 September 18, 2005 and October 18, 2005. Over the course of three Sundays, one hundred instruments were distributed and ninety-one returned for a response rate of ninety-one percent. After reviewing the

²¹ Robert Sommer and Barbara B. Sommer, *A Practical Guide to Behavioral Research: Tools and Techniques* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 188-190.

instruments, two were deemed unusable and were discarded. The useable number of questionnaires was delimited to eighty-nine, yielding an adjusted response rate of eighty-nine percent.

The data were then cleaned, coded and analyzed using SPSS 13.0. Descriptive statistics were generated to describe the study population. T-test, One-Way Analysis of Variance, and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to test hypothesis related to Phase I.

Project Management- Phase II- Group Counseling

Howard Clinebell in *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling* elucidates on the value of small group counseling within the congregational or parish context. He suggests, “group caring and counseling methods constitute the single most useful resource for broadening and deepening a church’s ministry of healing and growth.”²² Effective small group counseling can be invaluable toward educative and fostering growth toward wholeness within a congregation. In light of time, the nature of the research endeavor, methodological constraints and the desire to lay the foundation for a permanent ministry counseling utilizing a small group is the best suited.

Clinebell identifies five types of groups that are common in church’s ministry of healing and growth: (a) task, service, and action groups; (b) study groups; (c) supportive-inspirational groups; (d) growth groups; and (e) crisis counseling and therapy groups²³. Using Clinebell’s typology, the small group work conducted as a part of this study would

²² Howard Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1984), 349.

²³ Ibid., 352.

be classified as a “growth group” due to its educative and transformative nature. Clinebell

further defines a growth group as one that features the following characteristics:

(1) The dominant (though not exclusive) purpose is the personal growth of participants—emotionally, interpersonally, intellectually, spiritually and physically. (2) A group centered growth facilitating style of leadership is used—first by the designated leader and gradually by the entire group so that the group itself becomes an instrument and environment of growth. (3) The growth orientation is the guiding perspective; the emphasis is more on unused potentialities, here-and-now effectiveness in living, future growth, than on past failures or present hang-ups and problems, though these are not excluded from consideration. Growth groups are primarily mutual care groups, not counseling or therapy groups. (4) The group is composed of relatively functional people so that its aim is “making well people better.” (5) It is small enough to allow group trust and depth of relationships to develop. (6) There is back and forth movement from sharing and personal growth issues to considering content (ideas and or relational skills) which is relevant to the growth needs of participants. It is group educative counseling which blends personalized education with group counseling methods. Constructive changes in both attitudes and feelings on the one hand, and in behavior and relationships on the other are encouraged in growth groups. Concern for spiritual growth, understood as the heart of all human growth, should be a central thrust in all church-related groups. Empowerment to enable the growth of others should be one expression of the growth individuals achieve.²⁴

Development of the Study Instruments for Group Counseling

The goals of this phase of the study were twofold: (1) to conduct bible-based leisure counseling with congregants in a small group format to help them understand what their beliefs are relative to work, rest, Sabbath, time, leisure and church related views about leisure; and (2) to provide members of the counseling group with opportunities to reflect on scripture, how it is being applied to their lives, and aid in the positive transformation of behaviors toward abundant living.

²⁴ Ibid., 360-361.

Instrumentation- Phase II: Leisure Counseling Group

There were two primary instrument utilized to collect data in Phase II of the study. The first was the Scriptural Beliefs About Leisure Scale (SBAWL) that was used to pre-test and post-test group participants. The second instrument used in this phase was a packet of Teaching Notes relating to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. Teaching notes are used as a primary teaching tool within the culture of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church. Group participants were familiar with them and were comfortable with their use.

Scriptural Beliefs About Leisure Scale

The Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scale was used to measure the applicability of beliefs based on scripture corresponding to work, rest, Sabbath, time, and leisure. The instrument contained eleven passages of scripture and suggested application to daily living. For clarity, all scripture contained in the instrument was taken from the New Internal Version (NIV) of the Bible. Participants in the counseling group were asked to determine how well they were applying the passage of scripture and the assigned biblical principle to their life using a five point Likert scale. The instrument was administered to pre-test and post-test applicability of beliefs on the subject matter.

Teaching Notes

The second instrument used in this phase of the study were teaching notes on work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. A packet of teaching notes is located in the Appendix. Teaching notes were developed as independent learning units with a series of questions for reflection at the conclusion of each unit. Each participant in the counseling group was

asked to read each unit and respond to the “Questions for Reflection,” complete action steps toward transforming beliefs and behaviors, and provide any comments that were relevant to the unit. Responses were used for individual counseling after the completion of each unit. Two group counseling sessions were conducted where the content of the teaching notes were discussed. The sessions were didactic in nature.

Pilot Testing of the Survey Instrument

After construction of the instruments, pilot testing took place. Both the Scriptural Beliefs About Leisure Scale (SBAWL) and Teaching Notes were pilot tested in early September 2005. Draft copies of both instruments were given to ten graduate students at the University of Tennessee for pilot testing. None of the individuals who pilot tested the instrument were included in the sample. After the instruments are returned, modifications in wording and sequencing of questions were made based on the feedback obtained from members of the pilot sample. Packets containing the Beliefs About Leisure Scale (SBAWL) and Teaching Notes were assembled and disseminated the investigator.

Development of the Sampling Plan/Selection of Subjects

In Phase II of the research project, bible-based leisure counseling was conducted utilizing a small group. From the original sample eight respondents were strategically selected by the researcher to participate in individual and small group counseling. The goal was to select the eight busiest respondents based on their employment status and involvement in ministry with the congregation. Each respondent was given an orientation to this phase of the study and asked if they would consent to participate. Upon verbal

confirmation of participation, each participant was given a copy of the consent form contained in Appendix B for their signature. Upon return of the consent form, a copy of the document was issued and their name added to the group roster.

Small group work and individual counseling (two contacts) were conducted in December 2005 and January 2006. Small group meetings were scheduled for Saturday, December 4, 2005 and Saturday, January 8, 2006. Individual counseling sessions occurred Saturday, December 18, 2005 and Saturday, January 15, 2006.

The basis for individual and bible-based leisure counseling were data collected in the pre-test and post-test segments of this phase, utilizing the Scriptural Beliefs About Leisure Scale (SBAWL). Additionally, responses generated from the “Questions for Reflection,” “Action Toward Living the Abundant Life,” and “Comments” sections of the Teaching Notes, were used for discussion purposes in the group and for individualized counseling.

Counseling Approach

The focus of this segment of the study was utilizing Bible centered leisure counseling as a model of pastoral care and counseling. At the core of biblically based leisure lie precepts and principles related to work, rest, Sabbath, time, and leisure. Larry C. Loesch and Paul T. Wheeler in *Principles of Leisure Counseling*, provide a series of definitions, which have different intents. For the purposes of this study, the definition provided by Shank and Kennedy, which is grounded in theology was utilized. Their definition states:

Leisure counseling involves a careful examination of a person's faith, understanding of biblical terms such as work, rest, Sabbath, leisure and the subsequent beliefs, values, and attitudes pertaining to each term. The role of the pastor, lay counselor, Christian educator becomes developing an educational process as well as a counseling service which has empowerment and transformation as its goals.²⁵

This definition was more suited to directing leisure counseling efforts, which are focused, and results oriented.

Purposes of Bible Based Leisure Counseling

The goal of bible centered leisure counseling is to help the client understand the biblical basis for work and leisure and to become fulfilled personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually and linguistically. The aspiration is to move from a position of bondage to one of freedom and liberty to live and abundant life. There are several purposes of leisure counseling as espoused by Loesch and Wheeler. The following purposes are modified to emphasize the biblical aspects of leisure counseling:

1. Satisfaction- finding the balance of work and leisure through scripture which leads to inner peace and freedom from bearing the weight of traditional views relative to work and leisure.
2. Adjustment- making decisions about what work and leisure related activity may be consistent with ones beliefs and actions.
3. Remediation- to correct unsound beliefs about work and leisure, which drive errant behaviors and actions.

²⁵ Loesch and Wheeler, 66.

4. Prevention- through biblically accurate teaching and guidance assisting the client with obtaining information and developing a set of decision making tools which can be used to create a balanced and abundant life.²⁶

Rogerian Approach to Biblically Based Leisure Counseling

The client-centered or “Rogerian” or “nondirective” counseling orientation remains popular among leisure and pastoral counselors. Self-actualization is a key construct in the client-centered counseling orientation. “In general, self-actualization is a state where an individual has maximized all of the strengths, abilities, and functioning capabilities in ways that serve to maintain and enhance the individual.”²⁷ In essence, self-actualization represents the highest, most effective psychological state one can achieve. It is the penultimate goal of the counseling process but of human development also. A self-actualized person, through leisure counseling, will grasp, operationalize, internalize and live out the bible truths that lie at the foundation of a balanced lifestyle. Achieving a balance between work and leisure is their aim. Self-actualization will also lead to inner peace, after struggle with operationalizing work and leisure in daily living.

A second key concept in the Rogerian approach to counseling is that behavior is a function of perception. In other words, we behave in the manner that we believe. A significant portion of leisure counseling is devoted to helping people examine and evaluate the way they perceive themselves, their work and leisure activities.²⁸ While the process of helping the individual clarify work and leisure behaviors, change may not be

²⁶ Ibid., 64-65.

²⁷ Ibid., 73-74.

²⁸ Ibid.

imminent, but it will help the individual understand the determinants of behaviors. This understanding may potentially lead to a greater level of self-acceptance, contentment, or the need to change the behaviors in the hope of achieving self acceptance and contentment.

A third and important premise to the Rogerian method of counseling is that the client becomes responsible for making the required changes. Clients take responsibility for the process and outcomes. In the case of Bible centered leisure counseling clients take responsibility for reading scripture related to work and leisure, looking for the application, reflecting and then making a decision based on the biblical evidence to change incrementally. In the counseling process the attributes of the counselor are important. Empathy, genuineness, congruence, warmth, and knowledgeable about pertinent scripture will impact the receptiveness to counseling by the client.²⁹ Finally, withstanding the merits of the client-centered or Rogerian approach, there are detractors. This method can be slow and results may not be attained readily. Additionally, this method does not rely heavily on assessment instruments, experiential activities, and other potential sources of information.

Administration of the Counseling Group

This section addresses the administrative aspects of Phase II of the project. Administrative concerns includes considerations for selection of the sub-sample of the study population for participation in the group, special authorizations needed prior to the implementation of the group, development of the sampling plan, administration of the counseling protocol, and collection and analysis of the data.

²⁹ Ibid.

Considerations for Selection of the Group

A group of eight individuals were selected from the original sample to comprise the leisure counseling group. As Greenwood and Levin note in *Introduction to Action Research* this method is said to be “congenerative.” The congenerative model suggests that there are two main groups of actors in action research, those that are classified as “insiders,” who own the problem and those that are “outsiders.” who are generally researchers who seek to facilitate a “co-learning” environment aimed at solving the local problem.”³⁰ In this research effort the model is a hybrid in that the outsiders is the two additional participants that were not involved in the planning of the study as a Context Associate. All of the group participants will have equal standing, and a shared investment in addressing the local problem. What is equally important about the congenerative strategy is that it can lead to empowerment and liberation with the individual and the group. Participatory action research is the genesis of problem identification, reflection, and action toward change and transformation.³¹

Clinebell in *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling* outlines seven principles of effective growth groups that is utilized to form the group. These principles include: (1) group goals are designed to coincide with the needs of the group; (2) the group must be small enough in size to permit frequent participation and face-to-face communication among all its members; (3) at the onset, the leader must ask members what they expect to get from the experience; (4) having a flexible resource book, a topic, or a flexible outline of how the sessions is conducted tends to reduce anxiety and enable

³⁰ Greenwood and Levin, 115-116.

³¹ Ibid., 174-178.

the flow of group activity; (5) the group leader should create a warm, safe environment for the group; (6) the leaders should suggest tools which can be used to enhance interaction; and (7) leaders should be aware of the group as a whole, as well as of each individual.³²

Special Authorizations and Considerations

A part of the proper protocol for working with the study group within the context, the investigator was compelled to obtain an authorization to conduct research involving congregants from the church. Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:40 (KJV) reminds us to, “let all things be done decently and in order.” The authorization covers both phases of the project and was presented to Rev. Dr. Robert E. Baines, Jr., Pastor, on July 3, 2005 for his signature. Reference the document contained in Appendix B.

Additionally, considering the nature of the research endeavor, there is a moral duty to be in compliance with the guidelines for research involving human subjects. In light of the fact that the Seminary had no Standing Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (SCRIHS), three sources were consulted to insure that there were no violations of the rights of human subjects during the investigation. First, the *Guidelines for the Conduct of Research Involving Human Subjects*, published by the National Institutes of Health was consulted. Specifically, *The Belmont Report*, which addresses the ethical guidelines and principals for protecting human subjects was reviewed thoroughly. This report establishes three fundamental principles that are pertinent to all research involving human subjects: (1) respect for persons; (2) beneficence; and (3)

³² Clinebell, 369-371.

justice.³³ Based on NIH criteria for research involving human subjects, the investigator found no violations.

Second, the American Psychological Association was contacted via telephone to solicit an opinion about the potential for human subjects violations within the research protocol for this study. The researcher was referred to the *APA Ethical Guidelines for Research With Human Subjects*.³⁴ Again, after reviewing the APA guidelines, there were no apparent violations of the rights of human subjects involved in the study. Finally, in an effort to be consistent with the ethical guidelines for social science research, the text *The Practice of Social Research* (3rd ed.) by Earl Babbie was consulted. Babbie remains one of the premier writers in the area of social science research for better than three decades. In chapter 19, *The Ethics and Politics of Social Research*, Babbie provides a series of guidelines and considerations for conducting social science research. The sections relating to (1) voluntary participation, (2) no harm to the participants; (3) anonymity and confidentiality; (4) the researchers identity; (5) analysis and reporting; and (6) the professional code of ethics were again scrutinized intensely.³⁵ Two consent forms (one for the church and the second for small group participants) were developed to ensure that there were no violations of the rights of human subjects inherent in the study protocol.

³³ National Institute of Health, "Guidelines for the Conduct of Research Involving Human Subjects at the National Institutes of Health," National Institute of Mental Health [home page on line]; available from <http://ohsr.nih.gov/guidelines.php3>; Internet; accessed 10 March 2005, 1-7.

³⁴ American Psychological Association, "Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Subjects," American Psychological Association [home page on line]; available from www.acsu.buffalo.edu/rauln/apaethic.html; Internet; accessed 10 March 2005, 1-2.

³⁵ Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research* 3d ed. (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1983), 451-468.

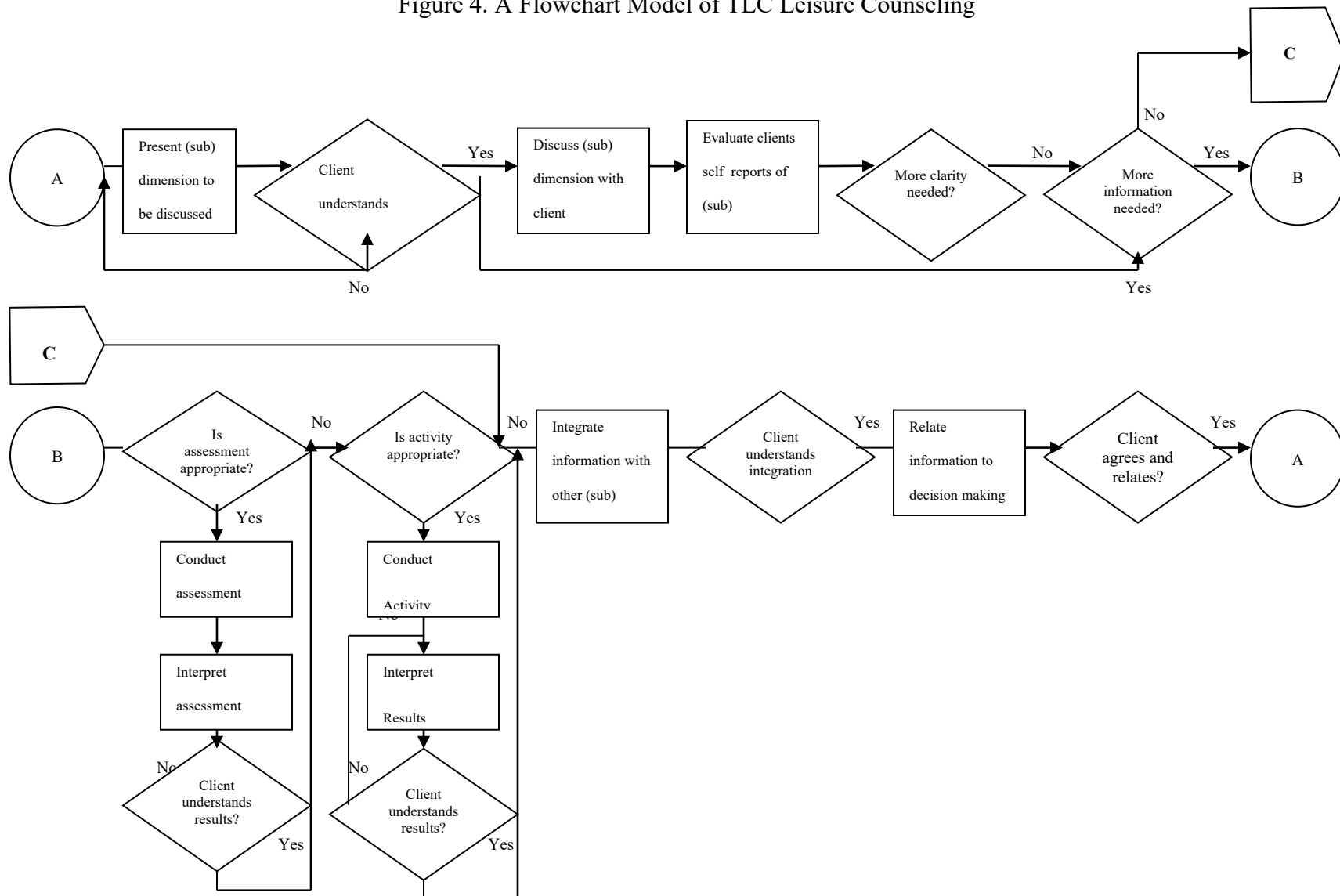
Administration of the Counseling Protocol

The TLC Leisure Counseling Model was utilized to conduct group counseling in this phase of the project. Figure 3 graphically depicts the model. Each member of the sub-sample, the small group, was given a pre- and post-test prior to the start of the individual counseling sessions. Instruments were collected and data recorded by the Investigator. Individual sessions will occur in person or via internet prior to the first group meeting and after the final group meeting.

As previously noted, the individual and group counseling sessions were conducted with the aim of ascertaining individual and group beliefs relative to work, Sabbath, time, leisure and church related views about leisure. The Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scale (RBALS) was used for the purpose of pre- and post-testing group participants. Each participant was issued a set of Teaching Notes complete with instructions. Respondents read each set of Teaching Notes and then responded to the “Questions for Reflection,” “Action Items Toward Living the Abundant Life,” and “Comments” sections of the summary document featured at the conclusion of each set of Teaching Notes. The responses recorded were used as the basis of individual counseling.

There were two group counseling sessions conducted on Saturday, December 4, 2005 and Saturday, January 8, 2006. The sessions occurred outside of the church at a time and place that was convenient for the group. The rationale for conducting the sessions outside of the church is to facilitate an environment in which group members can speak freely without feeling constrained due to being in the physical church building.

Figure 4. A Flowchart Model of TLC Leisure Counseling



Group Goals and Rules

To allow structure within the group and to guard against impediments to the counseling protocol group goals and rules were established. The primary goals of the group were five-fold and included the following:

- (1) To obtain a greater level of understanding about what the Bible says about work, rest, Sabbath, time and leisure.
- (2) To bring about the exposure of life patterns (i.e.- busyness, workaholism, difficulty enjoying leisure pursuits) that negatively impact our interactions with God, family, and community of faith.
- (3) To share thoughts about self-care, toward creating balance between “work” and “leisure.” The goal is to help us to take corrective action steps toward living the “abundant life” that God has given to us and Christ has paid for.
- (4) To provide an atmosphere in which individuals and the group can share ideas about what has been taught by the church or picked up on from our religious upbringing, which serve as barriers to having fun and enjoyment.
- (5) To educate, enable, empower and transform group members toward more abundantly living.

Additionally to aid in the successful administration of the group and counseling protocol, the group operated by the following rules. Each group member must:

- (1) have a signed consent form to participate in the group;
- (2) attend all scheduled group meetings;
- (3) must agree to read all related teaching notes and respond to the study/reflection questions per the assigned schedule;

- (4) conduct themselves in a Christ-like manner;
- (5) respect the opinions and positions of other group members;
- (6) be open to helpful suggestions from other group members;
- (7) be actively engaged in self-reflection that will lead to transformation of self
and other group members; and
- (8) be committed to the overarching group goal of educating, enabling,
empowering and transforming group members toward more abundantly living.

Group Session Agenda

In light of the short duration of time the group will spend together, it is important to maximize the time. Table 1 presents the standard agenda used to conduct group sessions. The content was subject to revision based on the needs of the group.

Table 1. Model Agenda for the Leisure Counseling Group

Agenda Item	Leader	Time
Welcome and Prayer	Investigator	0.04.00
Introductions	Investigator	0.05.00
Purpose and Goals of Group	Investigator	0.05.00
Introduction of TLC Counseling Model	Investigator	0.05.00
Review of Teaching Notes for Units 1-2	Group	0.20.00
Review of Study/Reflection Questions	Group	0.20.00
Observations	Group	0.10.00
Re-cap and Review of Assignment for Next Session	Investigator	0.05.00
Closing Prayer	Investigator	0.01.00

Collection and Analysis of the Data

Data collected from the ten group members correspond to pre- and post-tests administered at the genesis and culmination of group counseling activity and from four sets of teaching notes (work, Sabbath, time, and leisure) and Reflection/Action questionnaires. Pre- and post-test assessments were collected immediately after they were administered. Responses to Reflection/Action questions associated with the study of teaching notes were collected after the completion of each session. A one hundred percent response rate was attained due to the nature of small group work and the method for collecting the data. The quantitative data were cleaned, coded, and analyzed using SPSS 13.0 software. Qualitative data obtained from the Reflection/Action questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS Text Analysis 1.5. Hypothesis 8, which related to Phase II, was tested using T-Test.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FIELD EXPERIENCE OF MACEDONIA MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

Collection of the Data

This chapter contains the summary of methodologies used and analysis of the data collected from the study entitled “Recapturing the Abundant Life: Leisure Counseling as Pastoral Care. The study was conducted in two phases. In Phase I, a survey of the congregants of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, Dayton, Ohio, was conducted with the goal of ascertaining their beliefs about Sabbath, time, work, leisure, and the role of scripture, church tradition, and personal beliefs in leisure choices. In Phase II, bible-based leisure counseling, involving eight congregants in a small group format, was conducted. The principle aim of this phase was to determine whether individuals in the group changed their beliefs about Sabbath, rest, work, leisure, and living the “abundant life” after the treatment. Additionally, each participant prescribed action steps toward living a balanced, abundant life.

A Summary of Instrumentation and Data Collection

Instrumentation Phase I: Congregational Survey

Data collected in Phase I were obtained from the administration of a written survey instrument containing five major sections. Section I, “Your Beliefs About Sabbath” collected data related to beliefs related to Sabbath. This section was partitioned

into two subsections. A five point Likert scale was used to determine the strength of agreement with each statement in scale. Subsection I-A collected data pertaining to Sabbath beliefs and practices. Subsection I-B sought information about the respondents' beliefs about time. In this subsection, a five point Likert scale was used to determine the strength of agreement on each item within the scale.

Section II, "Your Beliefs About Work" required study participants to respond to statements about work. This major section was also divided into two subsections. Subsection II-A extracted data pertinent to the study participant's responses regarding work utilizing a modified version of the Protestant Work Ethic Scale. A seven point Likert scale was used to determine the strength of agreement. Items number 20, 24, and 25 were scored in reverse as noted in the instructions for utilizing the instrument. In subsection II-B, respondents were required to provide responses to five statements relating to their theological beliefs about work. All statements in this scale were derived from bible scripture. A five point Likert scale was used to determine the strength of agreement with each statement contained in the scale.

Section III, of the questionnaire, "Your Beliefs About Leisure" was also divided into two subsections. Subsection III-A utilized a modified version (five items) of the "Leisure Ethic Scale" to collect data pertaining to beliefs about leisure in society. A five point Likert scale was used to determine the strength of agreement. Subsection III-B required the respondents to divulge their theological beliefs about five statements related to leisure. Again, each statement contained in the scale was grounded in bible scripture. As utilized in the previous section, a five point Likert scale was used to determine the strength of agreement.

Section IV, “Scripture, Church Tradition, and Personal Beliefs in Leisure Choices” each respondent was asked to provide their “strength of belief” about twenty statements contained in the Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scale (RBALS). A five point Likert scale was used to ascertain strength of belief. Additionally, respondents were asked to identify the source of their belief for each statement, whether it is scripture, church teaching, or their personal belief.

Finally, the questions and general statements in Section V were utilized to collect basic demographic information about the sample. This section also contained questions required to ascertain areas in which the church should do more teaching, the importance of key topics related to the study and interest in support and counseling groups.

Instrumentation- Phase II: Leisure Counseling Group

There were two primary instruments utilized to collect data in Phase II of the study. The first was the Scriptural Beliefs About Leisure Scale (SBAWL) that was used to pre-test and post-test group participants. The second instrument used in this phase was a packet of Teaching Notes relating to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. Teaching notes are used as a primary teaching tool within the culture of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church. Group participants were familiar with them and were comfortable with their use.

Scriptural Beliefs About Leisure Scale

The Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scale was used to measure the applicability of beliefs based on scripture corresponding to work, rest, Sabbath, time, and leisure. The instrument contained eleven passages of scripture and suggested application

to daily living. For clarity, all scripture contained in the instrument was taken from the New Internal Version (NIV) of the Bible. Participants in the counseling group were asked to determine how well they were applying the passage of scripture and the assigned biblical principle to their life using a five point Likert scale. The instrument was administered to pre-test and post-test applicability of beliefs on the subject matter.

Teaching Notes

The second instrument used in this phase of the study were Teaching Notes on work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. A packet of teaching notes is located in the Appendix. Teaching notes were developed as independent learning units with a series of questions for reflection at the conclusion of each unit. Each participant in the counseling group was asked to read each unit and then respond to the questions for reflection, complete action steps toward transforming beliefs and behaviors, and provide any comments that were relevant to the unit. Responses were used for individual counseling after the completion of each unit. Two group counseling sessions were conducted with the content of the Teaching Notes serving as the foundation for individual and group counseling.

Summary of Sampling Plan for Phases I and II

This research endeavor was segmented into two phases. In Phase I, a congregational survey was administered and in Phase II, leisure counseling as an intervention was implemented utilizing a sub-sample of respondents from the initial congregational sample.

Selection of the Sample and Data Collection- Phase I

A stratified convenience sample of 100 congregants whose names appeared on the Active Church Membership List in June 2005. The names of members that contributed ten dollars or more to the church over a ninety day period appear on the list. This document was used as the sampling frame for the study. To accurately reflect the composition of the congregation, stratification was done based on age, gender, race, length of membership in the church, employment status, and involvement in one or more church ministries.

Prior to distribution of the instrument, each congregant was told by the researcher or one of the Context Associates about the purpose of the study to seek their consent to participate. The names of those who chose to participate were then highlighted on the Active Membership List. With the assistance of Context Associates, one hundred questionnaires were distributed to congregants that consented to take part in the study. Questionnaires were distributed prior to the Sunday School period and collected immediately afterward on Sunday, August 21, 2005 September 18, 2005 and October 18, 2005. Over the course of three Sundays, one hundred instruments were distributed and ninety-one returned for a response rate of ninety-one percent. After reviewing the instruments, two were deemed unusable and were discarded. The useable number of questionnaires was delimited to eighty-nine, yielding an adjusted response rate of eighty-nine percent.

The data were then cleaned, coded and analyzed using SPSS 13.0. Descriptive statistics were generated to describe the study population. One-Way Analysis of Variance, and Regression Analysis were used to test hypothesis related to Phase I.

Selection of the Sub-sample and Data Collection- Phase II

In Phase II of the research project, bible-based leisure counseling was conducted utilizing a small group. From the original sample ten respondents were strategically selected by the researcher to participate in individual and small group counseling. The goal was to select the ten busiest respondents based on their employment status and involvement in ministry with the congregation. Small group work and individual counseling (two contacts) were conducted in December 2005 and January 2006. Small group meetings were scheduled for Saturday, December 4, 2005 and Saturday, January 8, 2006. Individual counseling sessions occurred Saturday, December 18, 2005 and Saturday, January 15, 2006.

The basis for individual and bible-based leisure counseling were data collected in the pre-test and post-test segments of this phase, utilizing the Scriptural Beliefs About Leisure Scale (SBAWL). Additionally, responses generated from the “Questions for Reflection,” “Action Toward Living the Abundant Life,” and “Comments” sections of the Teaching Notes, were used for discussion purposes in the group and for individualized counseling.

Reliability of Scales

In light of the number of scales used to collect data in this research endeavor, the reliability of scales must be addressed. Reliability is the correlation of an item, scale, or instrument with a hypothetical one which truly measures what it is supposed to. Since the true instrument is not available, reliability can be measured by Cronbach’s alpha is commonly utilized to measure the internal consistency based on average correlation

among items. By convention, a lenient cut-off of .60 is common in exploratory research; alpha should be at least .70 or higher to retain an item in an “adequate” scale; and many researchers require a cut-off of .80 for a “good scale.”²⁶⁵

Cronbach’s alpha can be interpreted as the percent of variance the observed scale would explain in the hypothetical true scale composed of all possible items in the universe. Alternatively, it can be interpreted as the correlation of the observed scale with all possible other scales measuring the same thing and using the same number of items.²⁶⁶

It is important to note that Cronbach’s alpha increases as the number of items in the scale increases, even controlling for the same level of average intercorrelation of items. This assumes, of course, that the added items are not bad items compared to the existing set. Increasing the number of items can be a way to push alpha to an acceptable level. This reflects the assumption that scales and instruments with a greater number of items are more reliable. It also means that comparison of alpha levels between scales with differing numbers of items is not appropriate.²⁶⁷

Of the eight scales utilized to collect data in both phases of this study, all but the Protestant Work Ethic Scale (modified) had a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .70 or higher. The .42 Cronbach’s alpha coefficient on the Protestant Work Ethic Scale (modified) can be attributed to the elimination of nine items within the scale. Based on feedback obtained about the length of the scale and its potential negative impact on the amount of time required by respondents to complete the scale, the scale was shortened.

²⁶⁵ David Garson, “Reliability Analysis.” *PA 765: Reliability Analysis*, 15 December 2005 [course on-line]; available from <http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/reliab.htm>; Internet; accessed 31 December, 2005.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

The original scale developed by Mirels and Garrett contained nineteen items and achieved a Cronbach's alpha of .70. Table 2 presents a summary of the reliability of all scales utilized as a part of study.

Table 2. Summary of Reliability of Scales

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Sabbath Beliefs and Practices	.83	10
Beliefs About Time	.91	6
Protestant Work Ethic (Modified)	.42	10
Theological Beliefs About Work	.82	5
Leisure Ethic	.65	5
Theological Beliefs About Leisure	.91	5
Religious Beliefs About Leisure	.86	40
Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure	.94	11

In conclusion all scales utilized to generate data were within acceptable limits with the exception of the modified version of the Protestant Work Ethic Scale. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .42 was obtained which can be directly attributed to the extraction of nine items from the original scale.

Presentation of the Data

To facilitate the presentation and discussion of data collected as a result of this inquiry, the data is presented and discussed by project phase. For Phase I, the demographic data collected will be presented and discussed first, followed by data extracted from the use of scales in the subsections related to Sabbath, time, work, leisure, and finally data collected from the use of the Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scale.

Relative to data collected in Phase II, a summary of pre- and post-testing efforts will be presented and discussed first, followed by the presentation and discussion of qualitative data collected from responses to the Teaching Notes.

Data Analysis- Phase I

Demographic Profile

Gender, Age, and Racial Composition

Table 3, presented at the conclusion of this section, presents a profile of the study population. Of the respondents included in the sample, thirty-five were male (39.30%) and fifty-four were female (60.70%). In reference to age category, less than five percent (4.50%) were 21-30 years of age, while forty five percent (45.00%) comprised the 31-50 age cohort. The remaining fifty percent (50.20%) were between 51-70 years of age.

Relative to the racial composition of the sample, one hundred percent (100.00%) were African American. In regard to marital status, sixty-eight of the sample (76.40%) denoted they were married, while the remaining twenty one respondents (23.60%) declared single status as a result of having never married, being divorced, or widowed.

Church Membership and Service

When asked to indicate duration of membership in Macedonia, twenty eight respondents (31.50%) indicated they held membership for less than ten years. The remaining sixty one (68.50%) members of the sample indicated church membership totaling more than ten years.

As a part of formulating a profile of congregants, respondents were asked to indicate whether they were involved in a ministry within the church. Of the eighty nine respondents, sixty five (73.00%) indicated involvement in a ministry, while the remaining twenty four (27.00%) declared no involvement with ministry. Despite the fact that many of the respondents indicated that they were active in supporting the various ministries of the church, surprisingly, more than fifty eight percent (58.40%) indicated they were involved less than five hours per week. Additionally, a combined forty-one percent (41.6%) of the sample reported they were actively engaged in ministry between 6-15 hours per week.

Income and Occupational Status

Relative to income among the sample, more than fifteen percent (15.70%) of the sample reported earnings totaling less than \$20,000 per year. Over forty six percent (46.1%) of the respondents indicated annual earnings between \$20,001-\$40,000. Of the remaining respondents, twenty seven percent (27.00%) indicated they earned between \$40,001-\$60,000 per year, while the remaining eleven percent (11.20%) reported earnings between \$60,001-\$80,000 annually.

In terms of occupational categories represented among the respondents, sixty five members of the sample (73.00%) classified themselves as “professionals.” Additionally, ten members of the sample (11.20%) declared the occupational category as technical/trade. The remaining fourteen (15.80%) respondents declared themselves as business owners or students.

Educational Attainment

Examining the educational attainment within the sample, a combined total of twenty seven respondents (30.30%) held either a high school diploma, GED, or an associates degree. Nineteen parties (21.30%) included in the sample earned a bachelors degree, while twenty respondents (22.50%) reported being the recipients of masters degree. The remaining twenty three respondents (25.80%) earned a certificate or equivalent to an associates degree through a technical training program.

On a related item, number of years of education, ten respondents (11.20%) indicated they had matriculated in formal education systems twelve years or less, while fifty two participants (58.40%) denoted 13-16 years of education. Finally, the remaining twenty seven study participants (31.40%) reported 17-22 years of formal study.

Time Allocated for Work and Leisure

With respect to the respondent's perceptions about work and leisure, their responses were diverse. When asked about the number of hours worked per week, thirty members of the sample (33.70%) indicated they worked less than forty hours per week in a secular job. The remaining fifty nine respondents (63.30%) reported working between 41-65 hours per week.

The members of the sample were also asked to give their estimate of the number of hours of leisure time they had per week and sixty nine of respondents (77.50%) indicated the experienced ten or less hour per week of leisure. The remaining twenty participants (22.50%) in the study reported setting aside 12-30 hours of leisure time for leisure.

Table 3. Demographic Data

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Male		35	39.30	39.30	39.30
2.00-Female		54	60.70	60.70	100.00
Total		89	100.00	100.00	
Age Group		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-21-30		4	4.50	4.50	4.50
2.00-31-40		15	16.90	16.90	21.30
3.00-41-50		25	28.10	28.10	49.40
4.00-51-60		42	47.20	47.20	96.6
5.00-61+		3	3.40	3.40	100.00
Total		89	100.00	100.00	
Years of membership in church		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Less than 10 years		36	40.40	40.40	40.40
2.00-More than 10 years		53	59.6	59.6	100.00
Total		89	100.00	100.00	
Active in a ministry		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Yes		65	73.0	73.0	73.0
2.00-No		24	27.0	27.0	100.00
Total		89	100.00	100.00	
Number of hours participating in ministry		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
.00		23	25.80	25.80	25.80
1.00		3	3.40	3.40	29.20
2.00		4	4.50	4.50	33.70
3.00		12	13.50	13.50	47.20
4.00		7	7.90	7.90	55.10
5.00		3	3.40	3.40	58.40
6.00		3	3.40	3.40	61.80
8.00		4	4.50	4.50	66.30
11.00		6	6.70	6.70	73.0
12.00		4	4.50	4.50	77.50
15.00		20	22.50	22.50	100.00
Total		89	100.00	100.00	

Table 3—*Continued*

Marital status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Married	68	76.40	76.40	76.40
2.00-Single	10	11.20	11.20	87.6
3.00-Divorced	5	5.6	5.6	93.30
4.00-Widowed	5	5.6	5.60	98.90
6.00-Separated	1	1.10	1.10	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Income category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-\$0-\$20,000	14	15.70	15.70	15.70
2.00-\$20,001-\$40,000	41	46.10	46.10	61.80
3.00-\$40,001-\$60,000	24	27.0	27.0	88.80
4.00-\$60,001-\$80,000	10	11.20	11.20	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Highest degree earned	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-High School Diploma	10	11.20	11.20	11.20
2.00-Associates	17	19.10	19.10	30.30
3.00-Bachelors	19	21.30	21.30	51.70
4.00-Masters	20	22.50	22.50	74.20
7.00-Other	23	25.80	25.80	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Occupation	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Professional	65	73.0	73.0	73.0
2.00-Technical/Trade	10	11.20	11.20	84.30
3.00-Business Owner	3	3.40	3.40	87.60
4.00-Other	11	12.30	12.40	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Number of hours per week worked	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-0-40	30	33.70	33.70	33.70
2.00-41-65	59	66.30	66.30	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Number of hours of leisure per week	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-0-10	69	77.50	77.50	77.50
2.00-11-20	20	22.50	22.50	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Responses Related to Sabbath and Time

Sabbath

An analysis of the mean scores for the scale pertaining to perceptions related to the Sabbath is provided in Table 4. Respondents were asked to provide their level of agreement with statements relating to the Sabbath that were scriptural and praxis based. A Likert type scale was used to score each statement with a score of “1” assigned to the “strongly disagree” anchor and a score of “5” assigned to the “strongly agree” anchor. Statements one through four relate to theological beliefs related to the Sabbath, while statements 5-10 relate to perceptions and practices related to the Sabbath.

The statement which received the highest mean score was “God created the Sabbath” (4.67), followed by “the Sabbath was created for humanity rest and worship God” (4.53). The two statements receiving the lowest mean score were “People should not work on the Sabbath” (3.69), followed by “I have set aside a day in the week to observe the Sabbath” (3.48). It is interesting to note that the sample scored highest on their theological beliefs relative to the Sabbath and lowest on those statements which correlated with implementing a Sabbath in their lives. Respondents were somewhat torn about whether failure to observe the Sabbath constitutes sin. The statement “It is a sin not to observe the Sabbath” received the lowest mean score of 3.12.

Table 4. Mean Scores- Beliefs About the Sabbath

N= 89	Missing Cases= 0				
<u>FIELD</u>	<u>MEAN</u>	<u>STD</u>	<u>SEM</u>	<u>MIN</u>	<u>MAX</u>
1. God created the Sabbath.	4.67	0.65	0.11	1	5
2. The Sabbath was made for humanity.	4.35	0.700	0.12	1	5
3. The Sabbath is holy and is to be kept.	4.45	1.06	0.11	2	5
4. The Sabbath was created for humanity rest And worship God.	4.52	1.00	0.11	1	5
5. Observing the Sabbath allows for both physical and spiritual rest.	4.43	1.11	0.12	1	5
6. People should not work on the Sabbath.	3.69	1.42	0.15	1	5
7. I have set aside a day in the week to observe the Sabbath.	3.45	1.42	0.15	1	5
8. I feel obligated to observe the Sabbath.	3.45	1.42	0.16	1	5
9. Observing the Sabbath is a part of my Obedience to God.	3.89	1.40	0.15	1	5
10. It is a sin not to observe the Sabbath.	3.12	1.59	0.17	1	5

In regard to descriptive data related to perceptions about Sabbath, the summary data presented in Table 5 provides an interesting portrayal of the context. relative to Sabbath beliefs and practices. Over ninety-four percent of the sample (94.40%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement regarding God's creation of the Sabbath. Approximately eighty-four percent (84.20%) of the sample agreed that God created the Sabbath for humanity. The vast majority of the respondents (85.40%) were in agreement with the Sabbath being holy. There was also a high level of agreement (91.00% of the study population) relative to the Sabbath being created for the purpose of resting and worshipping God. On the statement relating to the observance of a Sabbath as a means for physical and spiritual rest a combined 89.80% of the sample either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

The sample was almost split on the issue of whether humanity should work on the Sabbath. Over twenty-one percent (31.30%) of the sample either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while a combined 55.16% of the sample agreed with the statement. It is interesting to note that only 48.30% of the sample was in agreement with the statement regarding the setting aside of a personal day to observe the Sabbath. In contrast, less than two-thirds (43.80%) of the sample indicated that they agreed with the statement regarding feeling obligated to observe the Sabbath. The majority of respondents in this sample (64.00%) agreed with the statement which suggested that observing a Sabbath is part of ones obedience to God. Finally, less than half of the respondents (40.40%) were in agreement with the statement that failure to observe a Sabbath is a sin. One possible explanation for this result is our changing views about work and the fact that many in the service industry are required to work on Sunday.

Table 5. Frequencies and Percentages Sabbath Beliefs and Practices Scale

God created the Sabbath		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	1.00-Strongly Disagree	5	5.60	5.60	5.60
	4.00-Agree	9	10.10	10.10	15.70
	5.00- Strongly Agree	75	84.30	84.30	100.00
	Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Sabbath made for man		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00-Strongly Disagree	6	6.70	6.70	6.70
	3.00-Neutral	8	9.0	9.0	15.70
	4.00-Agree	18	20.20	20.20	36.0
	5.00- Strongly Agree	57	64.0	64.0	100.00
	Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Table 5—Continued

Sabbath is holy and is to be kept			Valid	Cumulative
	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid 1.00-Strongly Disagree	5	5.60	5.60	5.60
3.00-Neutral	8	9.0	9.0	14.60
4.00-Agree	13	14.60	14.60	29.20
5.00- Strongly Agree	63	70.80	70.80	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Sabbath created to rest and worship			Valid	Cumulative
	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid 1.00-Strongly Disagree	5	5.60	5.60	5.60
3.00-Neutral	3	3.40	3.40	9.0
4.00-Agree	16	18.0	18.0	27.0
5.00- Strongly Agree	65	73.0	73.0	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Sabbath allows for physical and spiritual rest			Valid	Cumulative
	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid 1.00-Strongly Disagree	6	6.70	6.70	6.70
2.00-Disagree	2	2.20	2.20	9.0
3.00-Neutral	1	1.10	1.10	10.10
4.00-Agree	19	21.30	21.30	31.50
5.00- Strongly Agree	61	68.50	68.50	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Sabbath is holy and is to be kept			Valid	Cumulative
	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	5	5.60	5.60	5.60
3.00-Neutral	8	9.0	9.0	14.60
4.00-Agree	13	14.60	14.60	29.20
5.00- Strongly Agree	63	70.80	70.80	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Sabbath created to rest and worship			Valid	Cumulative
	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	5	5.60	5.60	5.60
3.00-Neutral	3	3.40	3.40	9.0
4.00-Agree	16	18.0	18.0	27.0
5.00- Strongly Agree	65	73.0	73.0	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Table 5—*Continued*

Sabbath allows for physical and spiritual rest	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	6	6.70	6.70	6.70
2.00-Disagree	2	2.20	2.20	9.0
3.00-Neutral	1	1.10	1.10	10.10
4.00-Agree	19	21.30	21.30	31.50
5.00- Strongly Agree	61	68.50	68.50	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Time

Those participating in the sample were asked to provide responses to six items related to time. Respondents were asked to provide their level of agreement with statements relating to the time, which are biblically based and grounded in the challenge of utilizing time effectively in their daily living. A Likert type scale was used to score each statement with a score of “1” assigned to the “strongly disagree” anchor and a score of “5” assigned to the “strongly agree” anchor. Table 6 provides a summary of the mean score for each statement contained in the scale.

The sample scored each item in the scale high, which suggests a high level of agreement about the theological importance and practical challenges relating to time. The mean scores ranged from a low of 4.17 to a high of 4.76. The statements receiving the highest mean scores were “It is important to set aside time to worship God” (4.76) and “It is important to used time wisely” (4.58). The statement receiving the lowest mean score within the scale was I do not have enough time and I sometimes feel rushed” (4.17).

Table 6. Mean Scores- Beliefs About Time Scale

N= 89		Missing Cases= 0				
Field		Mean	Std.	SE	Min	Max
1. It is important to use time wisely.		4.65	0.53	0.10	3	5
2. It is important to set aside time to commune with God.		4.72	0.54	0.11	2	5
3. I do not have enough time and I sometimes feel rushed.		4.37	0.86	0.08	1	5
4. It is important to set aside time to rest.		4.70	0.51	0.10	3	5
5. It is important to set aside time to worship God.		4.75	0.50	0.08	2	
6. It is important to set aside time for leisure and fun.		4.70	0.47	0.13	5	5

The high scores issued to each item contained in the scale also reflects an understanding on the part of the respondents of the wise use of time to commune with God, rest and worship. The high score assigned to the statement “It is important to set aside time for leisure and fun” (4.26) denotes a level of understanding regarding the importance of leisure as a function of Sabbath and for the restoration of body and spirit. Overall, the scores reflect a need for leisure in the lives of contemporary Christians as well as underscoring the fact that as Americans, we are still very driven by the clock ($\chi\rho o\nu o s$, $\chi r o n o s$) as opposed to living with the time of God ($\kappa \alpha \iota \rho o s$, $\kappa a i r o s$).

Table 7, located below details descriptive data pertinent to the study populations’ beliefs about time. In regard to wise use of time, the overwhelming majority (97.51%) of the sample either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. The vast majority of the sample (97.52%) also either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement related to the importance of setting aside time to commune with God. The respondents in the sample

provided interesting levels of agreement about feeling “rushed” in their daily regimen.

Over half (55.28%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement “I do not have enough time and I sometimes feel rushed,” while another 33.20% of the sample agreed with the same statement.

The respondents in the sample indicated a high level of agreement (a combined 97.51%) with the importance of allocating time to rest. It is important to set aside time to rest. In regard to the importance of setting aside time to worship God, 77.02% of the sample strongly agreed with this statement. Lastly, with respect to time, a combined 99.38% of the respondents indicated that it is important to set aside time for leisure and fun.

Table 7. Frequencies and Percentages- Beliefs About Time Scale

Important to use time wisely	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	5	5.60	5.60	5.60
4.00-Agree	17	19.10	19.10	24.70
5.00-Strongly Agree	67	75.30	75.30	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
It is important to set aside time for work	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	6	6.70	6.70	6.70
3.00-Neutral	2	2.20	2.20	9.0
4.00-Agree	22	24.70	24.70	33.70
5.00-Strongly Agree	59	66.30	66.30	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Not enough time and feel rushed	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	3	3.40	3.40	3.40
3.00-Neutral	3	3.40	3.40	6.70
4.00-Agree	56	62.90	62.90	69.70
5.00-Strongly Agree	27	30.30	30.30	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Table 7—*Continued*

Important to set aside time to rest		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree		5	5.60	5.60	5.60
3.00-Neutral		1	1.10	1.10	6.70
4.00-Agree		23	25.80	25.80	32.60
5.00-Strongly Agree		60	67.40	67.40	100.00
Total		89	100.00	100.00	
Important to set aside time to worship		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2.00-Disagree		5	5.60	5.60	5.60
3.00-Neutral		1	1.10	1.10	6.70
4.00-Agree		4	4.50	4.50	11.20
5.00-Strongly Agree		79	88.80	88.80	100.00
Total		89	100.00	100.00	
Important to set aside time for leisure/fun		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00- Strongly Disagree		5	5.60	5.60	5.60
2.00-Disagree		9	10.10	10.10	15.70
3.00-Neutral		4	4.50	4.50	20.20
4.00-Agree		11	12.40	12.40	32.60
5.00-Strongly Disagree		60	67.40	67.40	100.00
Total		89	100.00	100.00	

Work

This section related to the respondent's beliefs about work, and was developed in two principal sub-sections. Part A measured the respondent's general attitudes related to work. Respondents were asked to assign a measure of strength of agreement ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," utilizing a seven point Likert scale. The original scale was developed and used with a seven point scale, therefore for the sake of consistency the same scale was utilized in the instrument designed for this study. In Part B, respondents were asked to assign a measure of strength of agreement ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," using a five point Likert scale. Theological

statements related to beliefs about work were used to elicit responses. The cumulative scores from both sub-sections of Section II were combined to create a Composite Work Beliefs Score (CWBS) for each respondent.

Protestant Work Ethic Scale

To measure the respondents perceptions related to work, a standardized rating scale, the Protestant Work Ethic (PWE) scale was utilized. The authors interpret the Protestant Ethic as a dispositional variable characterized by a belief in the importance of hard work and frugality which acts as a defense against factors such as sloth, sensuality, sexual temptation, and religious doubt.²⁶⁸ There are multiple versions of this scale (Goldstein & Eichorn, 1961; Mirels & Garrett, 1971; Hammond & Williams, 1976; Buchholz, 1978, Ray, 1982; Ho, 1984).²⁶⁹ The instrument best suited for this study was the version developed by Mirels and Garrett (1961). This version contains six coding categories: (1) work as an end in itself; (2) hard work and success; (3) leisure; (4) money and efficiency; (5) spiritual /religious; and (6) morals. Each of the aforementioned subscales within the instrument was of great value to data analysis in this investigation. Of particular interest to this study were the “work as an end to itself,” “leisure,” and “spiritual/religious” subscales. The modified scale used in this study contained 10 items and three sub-scales. It used a seven point Likert-type response scale, “agree-disagree.” Within the scale, there is no intermediate or mid-point marker utilized. It is scored 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 respectively. Three items in the scale are reverse scored (items 4, 8 and 9). The scale is

²⁶⁸ John D. Cook, Susan J. Hepworth, Toby D. Wall and Peter B. Warr, *The Experience of Work: A Compendium and Review of 249 Measures and Their Use*, (New York: Academic Press, 1981), 141.

²⁶⁹ Adrian Furnham, “A Content, Correlational, and Factor Analysis Study of Seven Questionnaire Measures of the Protestant Work Ethic,” *Human Relations*, 43, no. 1 (1990): 389.

both reliable (Spearman-Brown .67; Kuder Richardson , .79; Cronbach .70) and valid (concurrent).²⁷⁰ Utilization of a reliable and valid scale was crucial because Protestant Work Ethic values are held by both individuals and groups.

Discussion of Results Relating to Work

Table A1, located in Appendix D, provides detailed descriptive information related to the respondent's perceptions related to work. Table 8 provides a summary of mean scores for each statement contained in the Protestant Work Ethic Scale. The mean scores across all statements in the scale ranged from a low of 3.52 to a high 5.23. The mean scores within the scale that opposed leisure ranged from a low of 3.52 (statement #2, "people who don't succeed are lazy") to a high of 5.23 (statement #1, "people who work hard have a better chance of success").

Table 8. Mean Scores- Protestant Work Ethic Scale

N= 89		Missing Cases= 0				
Field	Mean	Std. SE	Min	Max		
1. Our society would have fewer problems if people had less leisure time.	4.13	1.97	0.21	1	7	
2. Most people who don't succeed in life are just plain lazy.	3.52	1.99	0.21	1	7	
3. I often feel I would be more successful if I sacrificed certain pleasures.	4.40	1.52	0.16	1	7	
4. People should have more leisure time to spend in relaxation.	4.25	1.64	0.17	1	7	
5. Any person who is able and willing to work has a good chance of succeeding.	5.24	1.60	0.17	1	7	

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 385.

Table 8—*Continued*

6. People who fail at a job usually have not tried hard Enough.	3.80	1.60	0.17	1	7
7. Life would have very little meaning without work	4.18	1.65	0.17	1	7
8. Hard work offers little guarantee of success.	4.33	1.91	0.20	1	7
9. Life would be more meaningful if we had more leisure time.	4.04	1.59	0.17	1	7
10. If one works hard enough, he/she is likely to make a good life for his/herself.	4.10	2.00	0.19	1	7

Table 9 provides a summary of mean scores from statements relating to the respondent's theological beliefs about work. Respondents included in the sample expressed their highest level of agreement on the statement "God wants me to glorify him in my work" which obtained a mean score of 4.48. The respondents also showed a strong level of agreement regarding statements corresponding to work as a means to remove idleness from daily living (4.29) and work being an "act of godliness" (4.34).

On the whole, there was a mild level of agreement with the statement "because of Adam and Eve's disobedience was the cause of work (4.12). Lastly, respondents moved toward a very mild level of agreement with the statement "if one does not work, one should not eat" (3.12). The means scores obtained in this group of statements suggests that the sample has a fairly strong theologically-based work ethic. Additionally, the respondents acknowledge the fact that the Fall is related to humanity's requirement to labor. The mean score generated from the statement surrounding the requirement that one work as a prerequisite for eating suggests that the sample acknowledges the realistic deviations from this line of thinking and perhaps illustrates a heightened sensitivity and sense of compassion for those who struggle with employment concerns.

Table 9. Mean Scores- Theological Beliefs About Work Scale

N= 89		Missing Cases= 0				
Field	Mean	Std.	SE	Min	Max	
1. Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden we must work.	4.12	1.12	0.13	1	5	
2. God wants me to glorify him in my work.	4.48	0.76	0.08	1	5	
3. Work is an act of godliness.	4.34	0.92	0.97	1	5	
4. Work helps me to remove idleness from the day and avoid temptations.	4.43	0.89	0.94	1	5	
5. If one does not work, one should not eat.	3.12	1.66	0.17	1	5	

Table 10 provides a breakdown of the respondent's theological beliefs about work by frequency and percentage. It was interesting to note the less than fifty-one percent (50.93%) of the sample, either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement related to the Fall and work. In regard to work being a manner in which God is glorified, the majority of the sample (52.18%) disagreed with the statement. On the contrary, 62.02% of the sample was in agreement that work is an act of "godliness."

On the statement regarding work removing idleness from the day and aiding the respondent to avoid temptations, more than two-thirds (67.70%) of the respondents were in agreement. Lastly, 57.76% of the respondents were in agreement with the statement "if one does not work, one should not eat." The responses to the statements contained in the scale, which are theologically based, suggests that the Protestant Work Ethic is strong among the sample. It may also be construed that work is a vital part of the daily living for the majority of the respondents in this sample.

Table 10. Frequencies and Percentages for Theological Beliefs About Work Scale

Adam and Eve's disobedience was the cause of work	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2.00-Disagree	17	19.10	19.10	19.10
3.00-Neutral	9	10.10	10.10	29.20
4.00-Agree	9	10.10	10.10	39.30
5.00-Strongly Agree	54	60.70	60.70	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
God wants me to glorify him in work	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
3.00-Neutral	14	15.70	15.70	15.70
4.00-Agree	18	20.20	20.20	36.0
5.00-Strongly Agree	57	64.0	64.0	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Work is an act of Godliness	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2.00-Disagree	6	6.70	6.70	6.70
3.00-Neutral	9	10.10	10.10	16.90
4.00-Agree	23	25.80	25.80	42.70
5.00-Strongly Agree	51	57.30	57.30	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Work removes idleness and temptation	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2.00-Disagree	6	6.70	6.70	6.70
3.00-Neutral	8	9.0	9.0	15.70
4.00-Agree	29	32.60	32.60	48.30
5.00-Strongly Agree	46	51.70	51.70	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
If one does not work, then one should not eat	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	24	27.0	27.0	27.0
2.00-Disagree	14	15.70	15.70	42.70
3.00-Neutral	9	10.10	10.10	52.80
4.00-Agree	11	12.40	12.40	65.20
5.00-Strongly Agree	31	34.80	34.80	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Leisure

Section III sought to assess the respondent's beliefs about leisure. This section contained two key sub-sections. Part A measured the respondent's general attitudes related to leisure. Respondents were asked to assign a measure of strength of agreement, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," utilizing a five point Likert-scale. In Part B, respondents were asked to assign a measure of strength of agreement which ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," using a five point Likert-scale. Theological statements related to beliefs about leisure were used to evoke responses. The cumulative scores from both sub-sections of Section II were combined to create a Composite Leisure Beliefs Score (CLBS) for each respondent.

Leisure Ethic Scale

The Leisure Ethic Scale appearing in Part A of Section III was developed by Buchholz in 1977. It is one of five sub-scales contained in the "Beliefs About Work" instrument. The presupposition behind the development of this scale was that individuals regard work as a means to personal fulfillment through its provision of the means to pursue leisure activities.²⁷¹ Items contained within the sub-scale are scored one to five, with possible responses ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." One item within the scale is reversed (item 1). Even though data pertaining to the reliability and validity of the sub-scale was not available, the content of items contained within the sub-scale was of value to the construction of the instrument. The Leisure Ethic scale, in modified form (Crandall and Slivken, 1978, Buchholz, 1978) has been used repeatedly in

²⁷¹ Cook, Hepworth, Wall and Warr, 141.

various types of leisure research.²⁷² Tables 11 and 12, provide detailed information for the discussion of the respondent's perceptions related leisure and its theological basis. Table 11 provides mean scores for each of the statement contained in the Leisure Ethic Scale. The range of scores varied from a low of 2.66 to a high mean score of 4.16. The two lowest mean scores were tied to the statements "increased leisure time is bad for society" (2.66) and "leisure time activities are more interesting than work" (3.54). The two statements within the scale, which received the highest, mean scores included "success means having ample time to pursue leisure activities" (4.00) and "Leisure is important to our physical, mental, and spiritual well-being" (4.15).

Table 11. Means Table- Leisure Ethic Scale

N= 89		Missing Cases= 0				
Field	Mean	Std.	SE	Min	Max	
1. Increased leisure time is bad for society.	2.66	1.48	0.16	1	5	
2. Success means having ample time to pursue leisure activities.	4.00	0.93	0.10	1	5	
3. Work takes too much of out time, leaving Little time for leisure.	3.56	1.21	0.13	1	5	
4. Leisure time activities are more interesting than work.	3.54	1.11	0.12	1	5	
5. Leisure is important to our physical, mental and spiritual well-being.	4.15	0.85	0.09	1	5	

To provide additional detail relative to the respondents views on leisure, Table 12 provides frequencies and percentages for responses related to the Leisure Ethic Scale. More than half (52.80%) of the sample indicated disagreement with the statement about

²⁷² Iso-Ahola, 270-271.

leisure time being bad for society. A combined seventy percent of the sample (70.00%) agreed that success means having ample time to pursue leisure activities. More than half of the sample (a combined 65.20%) was in agreement with the statement which denoted that work takes too much of out time the day, leaving little time for leisure.

It was interesting to note that almost sixty percent (56.20%) of the respondents were in agreement about leisure time activities being more interesting than work. On the whole, over seventy percent (70.70%) of respondents noted agreed that leisure is important to our physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

The high percentage of respondents in agreement is indicative of recognition of the correlation between leisure and wholeness. The response may have been influenced by the growing popularity of the church's Wellness Ministry. In the congregation that is an increasing number of people that are actively seeking options for addressing health challenges. Additionally, as a function of the church's Community Involvement Ministry, health and wellness providers operating in the greater Dayton area have presented programs related to improving generally health within the context of overall wellness. In essence, there are a number of active intervening variables which may help account for the response of the aforementioned statement.

Table 12. Frequencies and Percentages for Leisure Ethic Scale

More leisure time is bad for society	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	30	33.70	33.70	33.70
2.00-Disagree	17	19.10	19.10	52.80
3.00-Neutral	4	4.50	4.50	57.30
4.00-Agree	29	32.60	32.60	89.90
5.00-Strongly Agree	9	10.10	10.10	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Success means more leisure time	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2.00-Disagree	7	7.90	7.90	7.90
3.00-Neutral	17	19.10	19.10	27.0
4.00-Agree	34	38.20	38.20	65.20
5.00-Strongly Agree	31	34.80	34.80	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Work takes too much time, leaving little time to relax	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	5	5.60	5.60	5.60
2.00-Disagree	18	20.20	20.20	25.80
3.00-Neutral	8	9.0	9.0	34.80
4.00-Agree	38	42.70	42.70	77.50
5.00-Strongly Agree	20	22.50	22.50	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Leisure time activities are more interesting than work	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	1	1.10	1.10	1.10
2.00-Disagree	20	22.50	22.50	23.60
3.00-Neutral	18	20.20	20.20	43.80
4.00-Agree	30	33.70	33.70	77.50
5.00-Strongly Agree	20	22.50	22.50	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Leisure is important to our physical, mental and spiritual well-being	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
3.00-Neutral	26	29.20	29.20	29.20
4.00-Agree	23	25.80	25.80	55.10
5.00-Strongly Agree	40	44.90	44.90	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Theological Beliefs About Leisure

Tables 13 and 14 chronicle the samples responses to statements related to their theological beliefs about leisure. Table 13 provides a summary of mean scores related to the theological beliefs about leisure. Mean scores ranged from a low of 4.00 to a high of 4.65. The statement receiving the lowest score (4.00) was “leisure is an important biblical concept.” The statement with the highest mean score (4.65) was “being silent, listening to God is an important part of being at leisure.” On average, across statements contained within the scale, a mean score exceeding 4.00 was attained. The high mean scores may reflect the recognition of the spiritual and restorative value of leisure.

Table 13. Summary of Mean Scores- Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scale

N= 89		MISSING CASES= 0				
Field	Mean	Std.	SE	Min	Max	
1. Leisure is an important biblical concept.	4.00	0.85	0.09	1	5	
2. God wants me to have leisure time.	4.17	0.67	0.07	2	5	
3. Being at leisure helps me to contemplate on the goodness of God.	4.25	0.70	0.07	1	5	
4. Being at leisure helps restore my body and Spirit.	4.33	0.60	0.06	3	5	
5. Being silent, listening to God is an important part of being at leisure.	4.65	0.48	0.05	3	5	

Table 14 provides the frequencies and percentages for the same battery of statements. Over seventy-five percent of the sample (75.20%) was in agreement with the statement that denoting leisure as an important biblical concept. An overwhelming

eighty-four percent (84.30%) of the respondents expressed agreement with the statement “God wants me to have leisure time.” In excess of eighty five percent (85.40%) of the sample was in agreement with leisure being a tool for contemplation on the goodness of God. A solid majority (93.20%) of the sample was in agreement with the statement “being at leisure helps restore my body and spirit.” The strong level of agreement is a testimony to the restorative power of God within the context of leisure. Lastly, one hundred percent (100.00%) of sample either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “being silent, listening to God is an important part of being at leisure.” The responses on the whole serve to positively reinforce the theological position that leisure is an important biblical concept.

Table 14. Frequencies and Percentages for Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scale

Leisure is an important biblical concept	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2.00-Disagree	5	5.60	5.60	5.60
3.00-Neutral	17	19.10	19.10	24.70
4.00-Agree	40	44.90	44.90	69.70
5.00-Strongly Agree	27	30.30	30.30	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
God wants me to have leisure time	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
3.00-Neutral	14	15.70	15.70	15.70
4.00-Agree	46	51.70	51.70	67.40
5.00-Strongly Agree	29	32.60	32.60	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Being at leisure helps me to contemplate on God	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
3.00-Neutral	13	14.60	14.60	14.60
4.00-Agree	41	46.10	46.10	60.70
5.00-Strongly Agree	35	39.30	39.30	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Table 14—*Continued*

Leisure helps to restore my body and spirit	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
3.00-Neutral	6	6.70	6.70	6.70
4.00-Agree	48	53.90	53.90	60.70
5.00-Strongly Agree	35	39.30	39.30	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Being silent, listening to God is part of leisure	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
4.00-Agree	31	34.80	34.80	34.80
5.00-Strongly Agree	58	65.20	65.20	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Religious Beliefs About Leisure

The Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scale (RBALS) was designed to ascertain respondent's beliefs about a common set of leisure activities that the Church and Black Baptists have traditionally determined to be "worldly." These activities have historically been viewed as taboo forms of recreation. Activities such as dancing, drinking beverages containing alcohol, gambling, playing cards, listening to secular music, and attending sporting events on Sunday are contained in unspoken list which congregants struggle with.

This scale was designed to assess the strength of belief about common leisure activities from a religious perspective (1= Strongly Do Not Believe; 2=Do Not Believe; 3=Neutral; 4=Believe; 5=Strongly Believe). Based on their study of the Bible, personal understanding of previous or current teachings of the church, and personal beliefs, respondents were asked to circle the number in the scale which best represented how strongly they felt about each of statements in the scale. In tandem, respondents were then asked to place an "X" in one column which best indicates the source or sources of their

belief. Respondents were given three anchors to select from Scripture (scored as 1), church teaching (scored as 2), or their personal belief (scored as 3). To capture the essence of the collective responses by congregants participating in the study, Table 15 was constructed to display the mean scores for each item contained in the scale.

The first activity listed in the table addressed the issue of dancing. The statement “dancing is a sin” received a mean score of 2.61 indicative of the belief that dancing generally is not strongly viewed as a sin. In light of a mean score of 2.41 relative to identification of the source of belief, the score falls into the category of a church teaching. On a related item, “dancing at a church sponsored event if fine,” the mean score was 3.88 which is interpreted as the respondents generally believe that dancing at a church function is fine. A mean score of 2.70 is indicative of the source of belief vacillates between a church teaching and a personal belief. This score may be attributed to a church teaching conducted on dancing as a “healthy” leisure pursuit and the fact that for two years dancing has been permitted at the annual Christmas Social.

The next activity listed in the scale was the consumption of alcohol. Consumption of alcohol as a sin was the next activity contained in the scale. A mean score of 3.32 on the statement “consumption of alcohol is a sin” indicates that the respondents were neutral on this item. Relative to the source of this belief, a mean score of 2.67 reflects the possibility of the source being a church teaching and/or personal belief. On the related statement “drinking alcohol in public is fine,” a mean score of 3.08 reflects a neutral position on the statement. On identification of the source of the belief about the statement a mean score of 2.76 was attained, indicating the respondents views were their personal beliefs.

Gambling as a leisure pursuit was the next item in the scale. When responding to the statement that “gambling is a sin,” a mean score of 3.39 was obtained denoting that respondents were neutral. Relative to the source of the belief, a mean score of 2.57 was obtained indicating that the beliefs assigned to this item are closer to being personal in nature. In terms of beliefs about gambling at a public venue being fine, a score of 2.84 was generated, thus reflecting that respondents were more neutral in their beliefs. In terms of the source of belief, a score of 2.84 was also attained, which indicated that the beliefs leaned more toward being personal.

Bingo has always been a popular activity within and outside of the church. Bingo has often been used as a method of raising money for the Church. When responding to the statement “playing Bingo is a sin,” a mean score of 2.94 was generated, indicative of the respondents being neutral of this item. On the question of source of the belief, a mean score of 2.87 suggests that beliefs about bingo lean toward being personal. Respondents were again neutral (3.07) about beliefs when playing bingo at a church sponsored event is considered. Finally, when the source of belief was examined, a mean score of 2.89 led the researcher to view personal beliefs on the part of the respondents was the primary source.

Akin to gambling and bingo is playing cards. When responding to the statement “playing cards is sin,” respondents collectively generated a mean score of 2.33, indicating they did not believe playing cards is a sin. When respondents score this item within the context of sources of belief, a mean score of 2.65 reflects that the source of belief lies between the teaching of the church and a personal belief. In contrast when asked to respond to the idea that “playing cards at a social event is fine,” a mean score of 3.73

cards as a social activity is acceptable. Lastly, a mean score 2.84 on the source dimensions indicates that the source of belief is personal

Movie watching generally is construed as a “good” leisure time pursuit. There is some consternation about viewing “R” rated movies, namely because of their content. Participants were asked to provide their strength of belief about “R” rated movies. On the statement “watching ‘R’ movies is a sin,” a mean score of 2.88 was compiled, thus indicating respondents were neutral on the statement. In terms of the source of their belief, a mean score of 2.96 was obtained, which reflects the fact that personal beliefs are most significant on this item.

The sample was also asked to assess their strength of belief about the statement “watching television is a sin.” A mean score of 2.39 reflects the fact that generally, the respondents do not believe that watching television is a sin. Withstanding a mean score of 2.67 on this item related to source of belief, it appears that the belief may be personal in nature. Juxtaposing the topic, respondents were asked to assign a belief to the statement “watching family oriented television is fine.” A mean score of 4.13 indicates that participants in the sample generally believe that watching family oriented television is a wholesome activity. Based on a mean score of 3.00 the aforementioned belief is anchored as a personal belief.

Related to health, wellness and proper stewardship of the body, participants in the study were asked to respond to exercise as a leisure activity. When the statement “failure to exercise is a sin,” respondents generated a mean score of 3.96 collectively. This is interpreted as respondents generally believe the statement. The source of belief appears to be teachings by the church based on a mean score of 2.08. The data generated for this

statement may reflect the emphasis that preaching and teaching in the Community Involvement and Wellness Ministries have placed on the importance of exercise as a function of stewardship.

In light of the popularity of amateur and professional sports in society and the fact that the National Football League at its genesis scheduled contests for Sunday to attract larger crowds, attending sporting events on Sunday continues to be controversial. The tension lies in the possibility of congregants foregoing worship services to attend sporting events. When asked to respond to the statement “attending sporting events on Sunday is a sin,” a mean score of 2.20 was obtained. This score reflects that fact that respondents did not believe the statement was true. In terms of source of belief about the statement, a mean score of 2.75 suggests that the belief is personal in nature. When study participants responded to the statement “attending a sporting event on a day other than Sunday is fine,” a means score of 3.97 was attained. The score reflects that fact respondents believe that attending a sporting event on any other day but Sunday is fine. Toward identifying the source of the belief, a mean score of 2.99 suggests that the source is the personal beliefs of the respondents.

With comedy shows increasing in popularity, attending comedy events is frequently viewed as fun source of fellowship. In the Black Baptist tradition, attending night clubs for any purpose is seen as taboo. Participants in the study were asked to respond to the statement “attending a comedy show at a comedy club is a sin.” A mean score of 2.57 suggests that there is vacillation between believing the statement and being neutral on it. When identifying the source of the belief, a mean score of 2.85 implies that the source of belief is personal.

The final activity contained in the scale involves listening to music. When the statement “listening to secular music is a sin,” was posed to respondents, a mean score of 2.37 was generated. The score can be interpreted as respondents not believing the statement. When asked about the source of the belief about the statement a mean score of 2.75 suggests that the belief is personal among members of the sample. To expand the question about beliefs about music beyond the secular realm, respondents were asked to provide feedback about the statement “listening to all music is fine.” A mean score of 3.28 was produced indicative of the respondents being neutral on the statement. Relative to identifying the source of the belief, a mean score of 2.65 implies that the source perhaps is personal but influenced by teachings of the church.

Table 15. Mean Scores Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scale

Statement	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Dev.
Dancing is a sin	1.00	5.00	2.61	.18	1.66
Source of belief	1.00	3.00	2.41	.08	.75
Dancing at a church sponsored event is fine	1.00	5.00	3.88	.12	1.05
Source of belief	1.00	3.00	2.70	.06	.59
Consumption of alcohol is a sin	1.00	5.00	3.32	.16	1.50
Source of belief	1.00	5.00	2.67	.08	.76
Drinking alcohol in public is fine	1.00	5.00	3.08	.15	1.41
Source of belief	1.00	3.00	2.76	.06	.60
Gambling is a sin	1.00	5.00	3.39	.13	1.26
Source of belief	1.00	4.00	2.57	.09	.82
Gambling at a public venue is fine	1.00	5.00	2.84	.14	1.33
Source of belief	1.00	5.00	2.84	.06	.60
Playing Bingo is a sin	1.00	5.00	2.94	.12	1.15
Source of belief	1.00	3.00	2.87	.05	.46
Playing Bingo at a church sponsored event is fine	1.00	5.00	3.07	.15	1.42

Table 15—*Continued*

Source of belief	1.00	4.00	2.89	.04	.41
Playing cards is a sin	1.00	5.00	2.33	.10	.99
Source of belief	1.00	5.00	2.65	.09	.83
Playing cards at a social event is fine	1.00	5.00	3.73	.09	.86
Source of belief	1.00	4.00	2.84	.06	.56
Watching "R" rated movies is a sin	1.00	5.00	2.88	.12	1.15
Source of belief	1.00	5.00	2.96	.08	.75
Watching "R" rated movies is a fine as a part of a social outing	1.00	5.00	3.35	.11	1.05
Source of belief	1.00	5.00	2.88	.09	.81
Watching television is a sin	1.00	5.00	2.39	.14	1.34
Source of belief	1.00	4.00	2.67	.07	.70
Watching family oriented television is fine	1.00	5.00	4.13	.12	1.11
Source of belief	1.00	5.00	3.00	.08	.74
Failure to exercise is a sin	1.00	5.00	3.96	.12	1.12
Source of belief	1.00	3.00	2.08	.10	.94
Attending sporting events on Sunday is a sin	1.00	5.00	2.20	.14	1.35
Source of belief	1.00	5.00	2.75	.08	.73
Attending a sporting event on a day other than Sunday is fine	1.00	5.00	3.97	.12	1.16
Source of belief	1.00	5.00	2.99	.07	.65
Attending a comedy show at a comedy club is sin	1.00	5.00	2.57	.11	1.01
Source of belief	1.00	4.00	2.85	.05	.49
Listening to secular music is a sin	1.00	5.00	2.37	.11	1.05
Source of belief	1.00	3.00	2.75	.06	.59
Listening to all types of music is fine	1.00	5.00	3.28	.14	1.35
Source of belief	1.00	3.00	2.65	.08	.72

In summary the majority of leisure activities which have been traditionally been viewed as sinful, the respondents did not believe were sinful. Additionally, the data suggests that the primary source of beliefs about leisure activities stem from personal beliefs held by the sample and not Scripture and teachings of the church.

Summary of Mean Scores Across Scales Within the Questionnaire

For the purpose of summarizing data obtained from all of the scales contained within the questionnaire, Table 16 was constructed. Its purpose is to provide in tabular form, key descriptive statistics for each of the seven scales.

Table 16. Mean Scores- All Scales

N= 7		Missing Cases= 0				
Field	Mean	Std.	SE	Min	Max	
1. Sabbath Beliefs and Practices Scale (SBPS)	38.94	7.05	0.75	22.00	50.00	
2. Beliefs About Time Scale (BATS)	26.90	4.74	0.50	10.00	30.00	
3. Work Ethic Scale (WES)	45.41	5.56	.59	27.00	63.00	
4. Theological Beliefs About Work Scale (TBAWS)	20.36	4.32	0.46	12.00	25.00	
5. Leisure Ethic Scale (LES)	18.70	4.04	0.43	11.00	29.00	
6. Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scale (TBALS)	21.40	2.87	0.30	16.00	25.00	
7. Religious Beliefs About Work and Leisure (RBAWLS)	59.87	7.15	.76	43.00	84.00	

Teaching on Sabbath, Sacred Time Rest, Work, and Leisure

This section provides a descriptive analysis of the respondent's beliefs about the role of the Church in teaching on the biblical and practical importance of Sabbath, sacred time, rest (physical and spiritual), work and leisure.

Topics for Increased Teaching by the Church

As a part of ascertaining future teaching needs of congregants within the context, respondents were asked to select the topics on which additional teaching was needed.

Table 17 provides data that addresses the issue of whether the church should teach

more on the previously mentioned subject matter. In regard to whether the church should teach more on the Sabbath, over forty percent (40.40%) of the sample indicated the church should do more teaching on Sabbath. On the topic of sacred time, less than eight percent (7.90%) of the sample favored the church conducting more teaching on sacred time.

The topic of rest appeared to be another area in which the sample confirmed that the church should provide a greater amount of teaching. Over twenty-one percent (21.30%) of respondents indicated that helping congregants understand the value of physical and spiritual rest should be a priority of the church. In terms of the topics of work and leisure, over twelve percent (12.40%) of respondents indicated there should be more teaching related to work. In contrast, eighteen percent (18.00%) of respondents requested more teaching in the area of leisure.

The manner in which members of the sample responded to each of the topics suggests that there is a concern about the spiritual relationship between Christianity, time, rest, work and leisure. The high percentages of respondents that indicated affirmatively that the church should do more teaching across these areas may also allude to the serious of concern over the lack of teaching in these areas.

Table 17. Frequencies and Percentages for Topics the Church Should Do More Teaching On

Topic	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Sabbath	36	40.40	40.40	40.40
2.00-Sacred Time	7	7.90	7.90	48.30
3.00-Rest	19	21.30	21.30	69.70
4.00-Work	11	12.40	12.40	82.00
5.00-Leisure	16	18.00	18.00	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Importance of Teaching

Relative to the importance of teaching by the church on the aforementioned topics, Table 18 provide an analysis of how the sample responded. On the topic of the Sabbath, more than eighty-eight percent (88.80%) of the sample rated teaching on this subject as important or very important. Related to the topic of rest, eighteen percent (18.00%) of the respondents noted that teaching on this topic was “important,” while greater than sixty six percent (66.30%) of the sample rated teaching on this topic “very important.”

On the topic of sacred time, slightly more than eighty five percent (85.30%) of the respondents perceived teaching on the subject of sacred time to be important or very important. The respondents indicating that teaching on the topic of work was either “important” or “very important” comprised slightly more than eighty four percent (84.30) of the sample. Lastly, over eighty five percent (85.40%) of respondents included in the sample indicated teaching on leisure as “important”/“very important.” Based on the relative importance assigned by the respondents to each of the topics, serious consideration must be given to teaching on each of the designated topics.

Table 18. Frequencies and Percentages on the Importance of the Church Teaching on Sabbath, Sacred Time, Rest (Physical and Spiritual), Work and Leisure

Importance of Sabbath in personal life				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Not Very Important	1	1.10	1.10	1.10
2.00-Not Important	6	6.70	6.70	7.90
3.00-Neutral	3	3.40	3.40	11.20
4.00-Important	26	29.20	29.20	40.40
5.00-Very Important	53	59.60	59.60	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Importance of physical and spiritual rest in life				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Not Very Important	5	5.60	5.60	5.60
2.00-Not Important	1	1.10	1.10	6.70
3.00-Neutral	8	9.00	9.00	15.70
4.00-Important	16	18.00	18.00	33.70
5.00-Very Important	59	66.30	66.30	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Importance of sacred time in life				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2.00-Not Important	1	1.10	1.10	1.10
3.00-Neutral	8	9.0	9.00	10.10
4.00-Important	30	33.70	33.70	43.80
5.00-Very Important	50	56.20	56.20	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Importance of work in life				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Not Very Important	1	1.10	1.10	1.10
2.00-Not Important	2	2.20	2.20	3.40
3.00-Neutral	10	11.20	11.20	14.60
4.00-Important	29	32.60	32.60	47.20
5.00-Very Important	47	52.80	52.80	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Importance of leisure				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Not Very Important	3	3.40	3.40	3.40
2.00-Not Important	2	2.20	2.20	5.60
3.00-Neutral	8	9.00	9.00	14.60
4.00-Important	22	24.70	24.70	39.30
5.00-Very Important	54	60.70	60.70	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

This concludes the general data analysis section for Phase I of the research project. The researcher now transitions into hypothesis testing for Phase I. In this section, seven of the eight hypotheses designated for the study are tested.

Hypothesis Testing

This section of the chapter addresses the testing of seven hypotheses related to Phase I of the study. Additionally, measures of correlation between key variables are also presented. For the express purpose of this study the following hypotheses were tested and analyzed:

- H₁: Among the study population, there is no difference in Sabbath Beliefs and Practices Scores (SBPS) between congregants with less than ten years of church membership and congregants with ten or more years of church membership.
- H₂: Among the study population, there is no difference in Beliefs About Time Scores (BATS) between congregants that are active in a church ministry and those that are not active in a church ministry.
- H₃: Among the study population, there is no difference in Work Ethic Scores (PWES) based on the income levels of congregants.
- H₄: Among the study population, there is no difference in Theological Beliefs About Work Scores (TBAWS) between congregants based on occupational category.
- H₅: Among the study population, there is no difference in Leisure Ethic Scores (LES) between congregants under age forty and those above age forty.
- H₆: Among the study population, there is no difference in Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scores (TBALS) between congregants under age forty and those above age forty.
- H₇: Among the study population, there is no difference in Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scores (RBALS) between congregants with less than ten years of church membership and congregants with ten or more years of church membership.

H₈: Among the sub-sample that participated in bible-based leisure counseling, there is no difference in pre-test and post-test scores when the Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scale is administered.

In terms of statistics utilized to test the aforementioned hypotheses, one-way analysis of variance was used to test hypotheses. With the dependent variable consisting of interval level data and independent variable being nominal in nature, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was the most appropriate statistics to use. This statistics also permitted the examination of possible differences between two or more groups on a given dependent variable. All hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance.

Sabbath Beliefs and Practices

H₁: Among the study population, there is no difference in Sabbath Beliefs and Practices Scores (SBPS) between congregants with less than ten years of church membership and congregants with ten or more years of church membership.

Analysis of variance was utilized to test the hypothesis. An F value of 3.96 (df= 1, 87; $p < .05$) was generated, thus the null hypothesis was not rejected. Overall, the Sabbath Belief and Practices Scores (SBPS) are not significantly different for respondents when length of membership in the congregation is taken into account. Table 19 located below presents the detail of the analysis.

Table 19. One Way ANOVA Sabbath Beliefs and Practice Score
by Length of Church Membership

	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	190.93	1	190.93	3.96	.05
Within Groups	4191.79	87	48.18		
Total	4382.72	88			

Beliefs About Time

H₂: Among the study population, there is no difference in Beliefs About Time Scores (BATS) between congregants that are active in a church ministry and those that are not active in a church ministry.

Analysis of variance was utilized to test the hypothesis. An F value of 3.29 (df= 1, 87; $p < .05$) was generated, thus the null hypothesis was not rejected. In conclusion, the Belief About Time Scores (SBPS) are not significantly different for respondents based on being active in church ministry. Table 20 presented below provides the detail of the analysis.

Table 20. One Way ANOVA- Beliefs About Time Score by Active in Church Ministry

	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	72.20	1	72.20	3.29	.05
Within Groups	1907.90	87	21.93		
Total	1980.10	88			

Beliefs About Work

H₃: Among the study population, there is no difference in Work Ethic Scores (WES) based on the income levels of congregants.

Analysis of variance was utilized to test the hypothesis. An F value of 3.19 (df = 3, 85; $p < .05$) was generated, thus the null hypothesis was not rejected. In summary, the Work Ethic Scores (WES) are not significantly different for respondents when income category is considered. Table 21 presented below provides the detail of the analysis.

Table 21. One Way ANOVA- Work Ethic Score by Income Category

	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	274.79	3	91.60	3.19	.05
Within Groups	2442.83	85	28.74		
Total	2717.62	88			

Theological Beliefs About Work

H₄: Among the study population, there is no difference in theological Beliefs About Work Scores (TBAWS) between congregants based on occupational category.

Analysis of variance was utilized to test the hypothesis. An F value of .84 (df = 6, 82; $p < .05$) was obtained, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. In summary, the Theological Beliefs About Work Scores (TBAWS) are significantly different for respondents when their occupational categories are taken into account. Table 22 presented below provides the detail of the analysis.

Table 22. One Way ANOVA- Theological Beliefs About Work Score by Occupational Category

	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	94.44	6	15.74	.84	.05
Within Groups	1544.05	82	18.83		
Total	1638.49	88			

Beliefs About Leisure

H₅: Among the study population, there is no difference in Leisure Ethic Scores (LES) between congregants under age forty and those above age forty.

Analysis of variance was utilized to test the hypothesis. An F value of 1.30 (df 2, 86; $p < .05$) was obtained, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. In summary, the Leisure Ethic Scores (WES) are significantly different for respondents when the age categories of respondents are taken into account. Table 23 presented below provides the detail of the analysis.

Table 23. One Way ANOVA- Leisure Ethic Score by Age Category

	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	83.57	2	20.892	1.30	.05
Within Groups	1352.84	86	16.105		
Total	1436.41	88			

Theological Beliefs About Leisure

H₆: Among the study population, there is no difference in Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scores (TBALS) between congregants under age forty and those above age forty.

Analysis of variance was utilized to test the hypothesis. An F value of 4.71 (df 2, 86; $p < .05$) was obtained, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. In summary, the Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scores (TBALS) are significantly different for respondents when the age category of respondents are taken into account. Table 24 presented below provides the detail of the analysis.

Table 24. One Way ANOVA- Theological Beliefs About Leisure
by Age Category

	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	133.36	2	33.34	4.71	.05
Within Groups	594.08	86	7.07		
Total	727.44	88			

Theological Beliefs About Leisure

H₇: Among the study population, there is no difference in Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scores (RBALS) between congregants with less than ten years of church membership and congregants with ten or more years of church membership.

Analysis of variance was utilized to test the hypothesis. An F value of 6.95 (df= 1, 87; $p < .05$) was obtained, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. In summary, the Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scores (RBALS) are significantly different for respondents when length of church membership is taken into account. Table 25 presented below provides the detail of the analysis.

Table 25. One Way ANOVA- Religious Beliefs About Leisure
by Length of Church Membership

	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	332.66	1	332.66	6.95	.05
Within Groups	4166.98	87	47.90		
Total	4499.64	88			

Correlation Between Scores of Composite Scales

To ascertain the strength of relationships between composite scores derived from the seven scales contained in the questionnaire, a correlation matrix was developed. Pearson's correlation ("r") was utilized to determine the bivariate correlation between scales. Correlation coefficients ranged from a low of .03 to a high of .80. Table 26 provides an analysis the correlation coefficients obtained when the summary scores from scales contained within the questionnaire are paired together.

There were several "strong," positive correlations shown within the matrix. First, the strongest positive correlation was between the composite or summary scores between the Leisure Ethic Scale (LES) and the Theological Beliefs About Work Scale (TBAWS). A correlation coefficient of .80 indicated a strong relationship between the sense of right and wrong (ethic) related to leisure held by the respondents and their theological beliefs about work. Among the sample, the strength of beliefs about the theology of work positively influences the sense of right and wrong related to the use of leisure in the lives of the study population.

The second strongest positive correlation was found between the between the summary scores of the Leisure Ethic Scale (LES) and the Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scale (TBALS). A correlation coefficient of .77 indicated a strong relationship between the sense of right and wrong (ethic) related to leisure held by the respondents and their theological beliefs relative to leisure. The strong "r" value is interpreted as the strength of beliefs about the theology of leisure that positively influences the sense of right and wrong about leisure in the lives of the respondents.

Finally, a moderately strong, positive correlation was found between the between the summary scores of the Beliefs About Time Scale (BATS) and the Sabbath Beliefs and Practices Scale (SBPS). An “r” of .63 is indicative of relationship between the beliefs about how we are to use time and beliefs and practices about Sabbath observance and Sabbath-keeping. The moderately strong “r” value suggests that our stewardship of and theological beliefs relating to time positively impacts beliefs and practices related to Sabbath.

In terms of negative correlations between scales there were weak to moderately weak correlations between the Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scale (RBALS) and the Sabbath Beliefs and Practices (SBPS; -.34), Beliefs About Time (BATS; -.44), Theological Beliefs About Work (TBAWS; -.31), Leisure Ethic (LES; -.22) and Theological Beliefs About Leisure (TBALS; -.12). The negative correlations indicate that when examining the relationship between religious beliefs about leisure activities, theological and ethical beliefs about Sabbath, time, work, and leisure are marginal negative influences. Table 26 presented below summarizes correlation data.

Table 26. Matrix of Correlation Coefficients for All Scales

	SBPS	BATS	WES	TBAWS	LES	TBALS	RBALS
SBPS	1.00	.63 **	-.14	.44 **	.12	.03	-.34 **
BATS	.63 **	1.00	-.11	.34 **	.17	.28 **	-.44 **
WES	-.14	-.11	1.00	.21	.33 **	.32 **	.08
TBAWS	.44 **	.34 **	.21	1.00	.80 **	.63 **	-.31 **
LES	.12	.17	.33 **	.80 **	1.00	.77 **	-.22
TBALS	.03	.28 **	.32 **	.63 **	.76 **	1.00	-.12
RBALS	-.34 **	-.44 **	.08	-.31 **	-.22	-.12	1.00

** - Significant at .01

Regression Analysis

To provide an opportunity to further examine the relationship between several key variables germane to this research effort simultaneously, regression analysis was conducted. Eleven independent variables, age, income and occupational categories were loaded into a regression equation. The remaining independent variables used in the equation were selected based upon their merit in the literature review and others based on their correlation coefficient as indicated in Table 26. The primary aim was to determine which of the variables had the greatest impact on Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scores.

Table 27 presents the results of the regression analysis. An R squared value of .43 was obtained. This indicated that forty three percent (43%) of the variation in the Religious Beliefs About Leisure scores can be explained when the eleven independent variables are included in the regression equation together. The remaining fifty seven percent (57%) variation in Religious beliefs About Leisure scores produced by respondents in the sample may be attributed to other factors not included in the equation.

Table 27. Regression Equation- Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scale

Dependent Variable- Religious Beliefs About Leisure (RBALS)					
11 Independent Variables					N=89
Variable	B Coefficient	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	78.61	9.73		8.08	.00
Sabbath Beliefs and Practice Score	.05	.15	.05	.31	.76
Beliefs About Time Score	-.41	.21	-.27	-1.99	.05
Work Ethic Score	.20	.14	.15	1.40	.17
Theological Beliefs About Work Score	-.41	.32	-.24	-1.28	.21
Leisure Ethic Score	-.48	.35	-.27	-1.39	.17
Theological Beliefs About Leisure Score	.46	.41	.18	1.11	.27
Age Group	-.46	.77	-.06	-.59	.56
Length of Membership in the Congregation	-.40	.15	-.35	-2.67	.01
Active in Ministry	-4.47	1.53	-.28	-2.93	.01
Income Category	.75	.81	.09	.93	.36
Occupational Category	-.26	.11	.09	.93	.36
Model Summary					
R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
.66	.43	.35	.575		
Analysis of Variance to Test Regression Relation					
Source	Sum of Squares	D.F.	Mean Square	F	p- Value
Regression	1954.83	11	177.71	5.38	.00
Residual	2544.82	77	33.05		
Total	4499.65	88			

Phase II- Leisure Counseling Group

This section provides an analysis of data collected in Phase II involving the leisure counseling group. The single hypothesis related to pre- and post-testing efforts

involving the group is presented first, followed by the presentation and discussion of pre-test and post-test scores on the Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scale (SBAWLS), and finally a presentation and discussion of qualitative data collected from responses to the Teaching Notes. The paired samples T-Test was utilized to conduct the hypothesis test. This procedure compares the means of two variables for a single group. The hypothesis was tested at the .05 level of significance.

Hypothesis Testing

H₈ Among the sub-sample that participated in bible-based leisure counseling, there is no difference in pre-test and post-test scores when the Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scale is administered.

Paired sample T-Test was utilized to test the hypothesis. A t-value of -2.21 (df= 7; $p < .05$) was obtained, thus the null hypothesis was not rejected. In summary, pretest and posttest scores on the Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scales (SBAWLS) are not significantly different for respondents in the leisure counseling group. Table 28 presented below provides the detail of the analysis.

Table 28. Paired Samples T-Test for Pre- and Post Scores
Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scales

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error	T	Sig.
Pretest-Posttest	-5.63	7.21	2.55	-2.21	.05

This concludes the hypothesis testing section for Phase II of the research project.

Pre-testing and Post-testing of Counseling Group

The primary aim of the leisure counseling group was to transform viewpoints, attitudes and behaviors about work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. To ascertain the level of change which occurred with each member of the sub-sample, pre-testing and post-testing was conducted utilizing the Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scale (SBAWLS).

Pre-testing was conducted prior to the treatment, which included issuance of a series of Teaching Notes on work, Sabbath, time, and leisure and individual counseling sessions. Teaching Notes were designed as narratives which highlight key passages of scripture and select applications. Each participant responded to a series of open-ended questions at the conclusion of each set of Teaching Notes. The responses were then used as the basis for individual leisure counseling. Upon completion of the entire set of Teaching Notes and individual counseling sessions respondents were pre-tested utilizing the same instrument.

When examining the difference in pre-test and post-test scores by item there were few scores that were significantly different. For the purposes of this study, a significant difference is defined as a cumulative change in pre-test and post-test scores of .75 or more. Change in pre-test and post-test scores ranged from .00 to 1.00. On the eleven items contained in the scale, there was no significant difference found in eight items. Of the statements in which significant change was found, the statement which was grounded in Genesis 3:17b-19, and illustrated that humankind was destined to work, showed a change of 1.00 point. The second most significant difference in pre-test and post-test scores occurred in the statement involving abundant life (Jn 10:10). A difference of .88

was generated among respondents. Overall, the results of the analysis of pre-test and post-test scores confirmed the result of hypothesis eight, in which no difference was found in pre-test and post-test scores. Table 29 summarizes the differences in pre-test and post-test scores for the leisure counseling group.

Table 29. Difference in Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores
Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure

Statement #	Variable	Scripture	Biblical Principle	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Difference
1	Create	Gen 1:1	God modeled work	4.50	4.75	-0.25
2	Cursed	Gen 3:17b-19	We must work over our lifetime	3.75	4.75	-1.00
3	Seventh	Gen 2:2	God rested after work	3.75	4.25	-0.50
4	Labor	Mt 11:28-30	Physical, mental, spiritual rest	3.63	4.40	-0.77
5	Sabbath	Ex 20:8-10a	Sabbath as a Commandment	3.75	4.25	-0.50
6	Legal	Mk 2:23-28	Avoid "legalism"	4.25	4.25	0.00
7	Season	Eccl 3:1,4	There is a time for everything	3.63	4.13	-0.50
8	Wise	Eph 5:16	Use time wisely toward a balanced life	4.00	4.13	-0.13
8	Quiet	Mk 6:31-32	Balanced life of work and leisure	3.86	4.25	-0.39
10	Wedding	Jn 2:1-2	Jesus' example of taking time for fun	4.00	4.38	-0.38
11	Abundant	Jn 10:10	Jesus came to liberate us from barriers to living a full life	3.50	4.38	-0.88

Attention is now focused on the analysis of qualitative data collected from responses to Teaching Notes which served as the treatment for the counseling group. Responses are grouped and analyzed by teaching unit.

As part of the data collection methodology for this element of the study, participants were asked to respond to questions in the “Question for Reflections” section of the instrument, denote personal action steps toward changing attitudes and behaviors related to the topic as applied to their personal life, and finally provide any comments related to the topic. The qualitative responses provided by the participants help to validate the quantitative data generated in Phase I of this study and data collected related to the Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scale used in Phase II.

To analyze the data which appear in the following sections, a narrative was constructed to summarize the major ideas and themes generated from by members of the sub-sample. The narrative is then supported by organizing responses in tabular format. SPSS Word Text 1.5 was utilized to identify key themes. Data is organized in four major sections: (1) Work; (2) Sabbath; (3) Time; and (4) Leisure.

Responses to Unit I- Work

In this section respondents were asked to respond to a series of questions relating to work. Responses correspond to the Teaching Notes related to work.

Scriptural Beliefs About Work

Each respondent was asked to give their assessment of whether or not they believe what Scriptures say about work. Specifically, study participants responded to

passages of scripture used in the Teaching Notes (Gen 1:26-27; Gen 3:17-20; and 2 Thes 3:10). When asked about their belief in the passages of scripture presented in the Teaching Notes over eighty seven percent (87.50%) indicated “yes” without further comment. One respondent intimated that believing in scripture related to work enhances worship and fellowship with Jesus. Overall, among the respondents, there is a common belief in the biblical basis for work. Table 30 presented below portrays the data related to scriptural beliefs about work.

Table 30. Summary of Responses Related to Scriptural Beliefs About Work

Respondent Code	Question/Response Do you believe what the Scriptures say about work?	n	Percentage
P2-1 thru P2-6; P2-8	Yes	7	87.50%
P2-7	Yes, being balanced in this area enhances our worship and our fellowship with Jesus Christ	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Importance of Work in the Faith Journey

Members of the sub-sample were asked to give their assessment of the importance of work in their faith journey. One hundred percent (100.00%) of the respondents indicated that work was very important to their faith journey. Two respondents associated faith and work with James 2:14-18, which speaks to the issue of faith without works. Twenty five percent (25.00%) of the respondents associated work with provision and blessing from God. The responses illustrate an appreciation of work as a gift from God and work should be used to glorify God and bless others. Additionally, one respondent

indicated a concern about “idleness” and work appears to be combatant against idleness.

This comment reflects the Puritanic idea that “an idle mind is the devil’s workshop.” In summary, the respondents considered work to be an important facet of their faith journey.

Table 31 located below presents the data generated from the question.

Table 31. Summary of Responses Related to the Importance of Work to the Faith Journey

Respondent Code	Question/Response Based on your understanding of scripture presented in the teaching notes, how important is work to your faith journey?	n	Percentage
P2-1 thru P2-3	Very important	3	37.50%
P2-4 P2-8	Very important part of faith. Faith without works is dead. Can be a blessing to others from work	2	25.00%
P2-5	NA	1	12.50%
P2-6	Very important. God wants us all to work in the world and the church. Secular works helps us to see God’s blessings. Work keeps us from being idle and out of the hands of Satan	1	12.50%
P2-7	Work is very important because I allows us to have earthly bound provisions to sustain lives for ourselves and families	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Current Employment Status

As a validation measure related to work, respondents were asked to indicate their employment status. One hundred percent (100.00%) of the respondents indicated that they were employed. One respondent indicated a volunteer experience as the source of employment. The fact that all respondents are employed validates the high mean scores

for the sub-sample of on the Protestant Work Ethic Scale (WES) and responses to work related questions on the Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scale (SBAWLS).

Table 32 presented below summarizes the data.

Table 32. Summary of Responses About Employment Status

Respondent Code	Question/Response Are you currently working?	N	Percentage
P2-1 thru P2-5; P27-P2-8	Yes	7	87.50%
P2-6	Yes, I am currently working as a volunteer and coordinating the academic enrichment and after school programs at the church.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Hindrances to Work in a Biblical Manner

To further extract the nuances about work within the counseling group, participants were asked to elaborate upon what they perceived as barriers to their capacity to view and manage work in a biblical manner. The primary idea with this inquiry was to extract thoughts about their own work life in comparison to the pattern of work God established in Genesis chapters 1 and 2.

Two participants opted not to respond to the questions. The remaining seventy five percent (75.00%) of respondents provide a range of responses to the question. Two respondents indicated that they worked to maintain their lifestyle and to stay ahead. The remaining respondents ascribe their barriers to managing work in their life to factors such as the inability to say “no,” poor time management, or working hard to boost self-esteem. What is important about this series of responses is that they identify personal motivations

for a staunch work ethic. Table 33 presented below summarizes responses provided by members of the sub-sample.

Table 33. Summary of Responses Relating to Barriers to Managing Work in a Biblical Manner

Respondent Code	Question/Response What appears to be your greatest hindrance to managing work in your life in a biblical manner?	n	Percentage
P2-1	Not wanting to feel inferior to my peers. Wanting everyone to think highly of me and value me.	1	12.50%
P2-2	I am a workaholic. Must keep working to stay ahead.	1	12.50%
P2-3	Satan	1	12.50%
P2-4 and P2-5	NA	2	25.00%
P2-6	Prioritizing and time management	1	12.50%
P2-7	Working to maintain a “middle class” lifestyle	1	12.50%
P2-8	Not knowing when to say no. Taking on more than I can handle.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100%

Actions Toward Living the Abundant Life

Toward the end of transforming attitudes and behaviors related to work, participants were required to generate actions steps to assist in the transformation. Each participant was asked to generate action steps that they could commit to and were immediately attainable. The action steps were developed after reflecting upon the corresponding set of teaching notes.

As indicated in Table 34, there was a variety of actions steps proposed. The central themes of responses included the following: (1) reading and studying the Bible for clarity and direction about work, inclusive of Sabbath-keeping; (2) prioritization of tasks

to determine the importance of tasks associated with work; (3) finding something fun to do as an alternative to work; and (4) utilizing time management tools to avoid falling into a pattern of overworking. In general, each respondent selected actions which were personally meaningful and attainable toward the end of facilitating change in their respective lives.

Table 34. Summary of Responses Relating to Action Steps Toward Living Abundantly

Respondent Code	Statement/Response	n	Percentage
	Based on the content of the teaching notes, my study of scripture, reflection and prayer, I am committing to do the following three things to help me better manage work in my life.		
P2-1	1. Evaluating which tasks are essential and prioritizing projects 2. Not trying to wipe my “to do” list clean each day 3. Find something fun to do each week that will “pull” me away from work.	1	12.50%
P2-2	1. Learn to have more fun each week. 2. Get back to doing things that are fun. 3. Not listen to the negative things about doing things with the church.	1	12.50%
P2-3	1. Staying more focused on what God wants for my life	1	12.50%
P2-4	1. Being consistent and establish routines	1	12.50%
P2-5	1. Stop overworking 2. Being mindful of God’s word 3. Learn to take time to enjoy the small stuff	1	12.50%
P2-6	1. Do first things first more often 2. Keep appointments daily with journal or calendar 3. Make time for God through prayer daily	1	12.50%
P2-8	1. Study Gods word for mental stability 2. Eat right, for mental and physical health 3. Remember the Sabbath, allow myself one day for rest and leisure	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

General Comments

Respondents were provided an opportunity to provide additional comments to this unit of the Teaching Notes. Half of the members of the sub-sample opted not to comment, while the remaining fifty percent (50.00%) provided comments. Based on the comments provided, respondents desired to work harder at observing a Sabbath, find the balance in life, and better manage secondary work in retirement.

Table 35. Summary of Comments Related to Work

Respondent Code	Response	n	Percentage
P2-1	Working harder to make sure I observe a Sabbath.	1	12.50%
P2-2	Working harder to find balance in my life.	1	12.50%
P2-3	No comment.	4	50.00%
P2-4			
P2-6			
P2-8			
P2-5	I am working on a faith walk of spiritual significance	1	12.50%
P2-7	Retirement is simply another term for second career. This is a time to enjoy the ability to help others who are struggling.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Responses Unit II- Sabbath

Scriptural Beliefs About Sabbath

The second set of Teaching Notes addressed the topic of Sabbath. Respondents were asked to give their assessment of whether or not they believe what Scriptures say about Sabbath. Specifically, study participants responded to passages of scripture used in

the Teaching Notes (Gen 2:-13; Ex 16:23-30; Mk 2:23-27). When asked about their belief in the passages of scripture presented in the Teaching Notes the entire sample indicated “yes.” Three respondents provided additional comments which provided further insight into their beliefs about Sabbath. Comments ranged from identifying that Sabbath is a day of rest to an acknowledgement that obedience to the Sabbath Commandment yields an opportunity for rest and reflection. Additionally, one respondent aired a concern about applying the biblical idea behind the Sabbath within the context of a busy lifestyle. Table 36 provides a summary of responses related to the belief in scriptures pertaining to Sabbath.

Table 36. Summary of Responses Relating to Belief in Scriptures Related to Sabbath

Respondent Code	Question/Response Do you believe what the scriptures say about the Sabbath?	N	Percentage
P2-1 thru P2-8	Yes	5	62.50%
P2-3	Yes. Sabbath is a day of rest with the Lord.	1	12.50%
P2-4	Yes, but how do you apply it in today’s busy world?	1	12.50%
P2-7	Yes, we must understand the value of rest and reflection.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Importance of Sabbath in the Faith Journey

Members of the sub-sample were asked to provide feedback on the importance of Sabbath-keeping in their faith journey. One hundred percent (100.00%) of the respondents indicated that Sabbath-keeping was either important or very important to

their faith journey. Three respondents associated Sabbath-keeping with obedience to God's word and as a time of rest and reflection. Two respondents in the sub-sample identified Sabbath-keeping as valuable in terms of preparation for worship and service. Another common theme espoused by respondents was the idea of Sabbath-keeping as a time for family and fellowship. The comments provided by the respondents reflect the high mean scores on items contained in the Sabbath Beliefs and Practices Scale. Overall, respondents were able to identify Sabbath-keeping as a period of rest and reflection and as being valuable toward preparation for worship and fellowship. Table 37 provides a summary of responses related to Sabbath-keeping.

Table 37. Summary of Responses Relating to the Importance of Sabbath in the Faith Journey

Respondent Code	Question/Response Based on your understanding of scripture presented in the teaching notes, how important is keeping a Sabbath to your faith journey?	n	Percentage
P2-1	Very important	2	
P2-2			
P2-3	Very important. Each day with God is a Sabbath Day.	1	12.50%
P2-4	Important, but how do I apply it is my concern.	2	25.00%
P2-5	Very important. I am setting aside the time in obedience to the word of God. Also, living out the Sabbath helps prepare me for worship and service by being less stressed and less anxious.		
P2-6	Very important. I use the day to rest and reflect on the goodness of God. It is a great time for families to get together.	1	12.50%
P2-7	Yes, but only as a day of worship and fellowship with other Believers.	1	12.50%
P2-8	Very important. We must obey God's word.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Current Sabbath Observance

When the inquiry was made about whether the respondents were presently observing a Sabbath, over sixty two percent (62.50%) of the sub-sample indicated that they were presently observing a Sabbath period. Three respondents indicated that they were not presently observing a Sabbath period. Of the respondents indicating they were presently observing a Sabbath, a variety of qualifying statements were offered. Responses indicated that efforts are being made to declare and keep a Sabbath period. One respondent indicated that Saturday is a day in which a Sabbath period is observed, while a second respondent noted that each day is a Sabbath Day.

For the three respondents indicating that they were not engaged in observance of a Sabbath, two of the three indicated that they were working on making time to observe a Sabbath in their respective lives. Table 38 provides a summary of responses related to Sabbath observance efforts by the counseling group.

Table 38. Summary of Responses Relating to the Sabbath Observance
Faith Journey

Respondent Code	Question/Response	n	Percentage
	Are you currently setting aside a day to observe a Sabbath?		
P2-1, P2-6	Yes, for the most part.	1	25.00%
P2-2	Yes. Saturday in my Sabbath.	1	12.50%
P2-3	Yes. I see each day as a Sabbath.	1	12.50%
P2-4	No.	1	12.50%
P2-5	Yes. I am working at guarding that day.	1	12.50%
P2-7	No, But now I have a better understanding of the Sabbath I will diligently move toward that day of rest and reflection.	1	12.50%
P2-8	No, but I am working on it.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Hindrances to Sabbath Observance

In regard to hindrances or barriers to Sabbath-keeping, an assortment of responses were provided by the counseling group. Common themes noted by the group were segmented into three key barriers; (1) prioritization of time to make sure that a Sabbath period is designated and kept; (2) management of family and church related responsibilities to avoid impingement on time set aside to observe a Sabbath period; and (3) filling in time which could be used to observe a Sabbath period with other activities to fill the void left by the absence of work. Table 39 provides a summary of the responses related to hindrances to Sabbath-keeping.

Table 39. Summary of Responses Relating to the Hindrances to Sabbath-keeping

Respondent Code	Question/Response What appears to be your greatest hindrance to keeping a Sabbath?	n	Percentage
P2-1	Demand from other and household chores	1	12.50%
P2-2	Getting work for the Church done on Saturday.	1	12.50%
P2-3	There are none.	1	12.50%
P2-4	Discipline in my schedule.	1	12.50%
P2-5	Making it a priority in my life.	1	
P2-6	Being anxious and finding other things to do with the time since I do not work on Sunday.	1	12.50%
P2-7	Learning how to say no. You cannot make time if you don't have time.	1	12.50%
P2-8	Making the time in a crazy schedule.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Actions Toward Living the Abundant Life

Toward the end of transforming attitudes and behaviors related to Sabbath, participants were required to generate actions steps to assist in the transformation. All but one of the respondents generated action steps.

As indicated in Table 40, there were a variety of actions steps proposed. The central themes of responses included the following: (1) reading and studying the Bible for clarity and direction about Sabbath-keeping; (2) prioritization of tasks to eliminate conflicts with the desire to observe and keep a Sabbath; (3) do more teaching on Sabbath; (4) development of a Sabbath lifestyle; and (5) commit to taking the necessary actions to create a balanced lifestyle.

Table 40. Summary of Action Steps Related to Sabbath Observance

Respondent Code	Statement/Response	n	Percentage
	Based on the content of the teaching notes, my study of scripture, reflection and prayer, I am committing to do the following three things to help me declare and keep a Sabbath:		
P2-1	1. Attend worship and Bible study at least once per week	1	12.50%
P2-2	2. Complete chores prior to the weekend. 1. Restrict outside commitments to guard one day 2. Make sure that I read the Bible and keep the commandment in my mind and heart 3. Work on developing a slower, more reflective lifestyle	1	12.50%
P2-3	1. NA	1	12.50%

Table 40—*Continued*

P2-4	1. Focus on my prayer life to live a Sabbath lifestyle. 2. Moving my life into observing a Sabbath in a progressive way.	1	12.50%
P2-5	1. Not planning distractions on my chosen day. 2. Preparing my mind and heart for that day regularly 3. Teaching the importance of the Sabbath when possible to others.	1	12.50%
P2-6	1. Preparation to enter the Sabbath with thanksgiving and a prayerful attitude. 2. Participation in the worship experience and seek to edify Believers on the Sabbath. 3. Enjoy the rest and relaxation the Sabbath offers with family and friends.	1	12.50%
P2-7	1. Organize my life. 2. Stay focused on the importance, purpose and the will of God (continue to pray for mental strength) 3. Commit to make it happen.	1	12.50%
P2-8	1. Making sure that I keep at least a half a day open in the week. 2. Read the scriptures more. 3. Make sure that I balance my commitment to work and the church.	1	12.50%
Total		8	100.00%

General Comments

Respondents were provided an opportunity to provide additional comments to this unit of the Teaching Notes. Over sixty two percent (62.50%) of the sub-sample did not comment, while the remaining thirty seven percent (37.50%) provided comments. The essence of comments was threefold: (1) be obedient to the Sabbath Commandment; (2) slow down and observe a Sabbath; and (3) the Teaching Notes on Sabbath helped one

respondent to think about the role of Sabbath in their life. Table 41 provides a short summary of responses.

Table 41. Summary of Comments Related to Sabbath

Respondent Code	Response	n	Percentage
P2-1 thru P2-5	NA	5	62.50%
P2-6	To remember the Sabbath to me means to reflect and focus on the God of the Sabbath and be obedient to what the scriptures say about such.	1	12.50%
P2-7	We all need to slow down and declare a Sabbath.	1	12.50%
P2-8	This reading material made me think about my life.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Responses to Unit III- Time

In this section respondents were challenged to address questions about time and the general stewardship of time.

Belief of Scripture Related to Time

The third set of Teaching Notes addressed the topic of time. Respondents were asked to give their opinion of whether or not they believe what select passages of scripture say about time. Specifically, study participants responded to passages of scripture used in the Teaching Notes (Eccl 3:1-11; Lk 12:42-48; and Eph 5:16). When asked about their belief in the passages of scripture presented in the Teaching Notes the entire sample indicated “yes.” Two respondents provided additional commentary noting agreement with the biblical idea that “there is a time for everything” and that stewardship

of time is important. The comments contained in Table 42 illustrate the aforementioned comments.

Table 42. Summary of Responses About Time

Respondent Code	Question/Response Do you believe what the scriptures say about time and its wise use?	n	Percentage
P2-1 thru P2-6	Yes.	6	75.00%
P2-7	Yes, the scriptures say there is a time for everything.	1	12.50%
P2-8	Yes. Most of us abuse the time in their life by filling their calendars and being too busy. This is not wise stewardship.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Importance of Time on the Faith Journey

When the counseling group participants were asked about the importance of the wise use of time on their faith journey they all responded that the wise use of time was very important. Five of the respondents provide comments which were couched in the following areas: (1) chronological time has limits; (2) giving God time is a way to show how much God is loved; (3) prayer is used as means to make decisions about the wise use of time. On the whole the respondents exhibited an understanding of the limitations of chronological time and the importance of placing God first in their stewardship of time. Table 43 provides a summary of the responses to the question of the importance of time in the faith journey of the respondents.

Table 43. Summary of the Importance of the Wise Use of Time on the Faith Journey

Respondent Code	Question/Response Based on your understanding of scripture presented in the teaching notes, how important is the wise use of time to your faith journey?	n	Percentage
P2-1 thru P2-3	Very important.	3	37.50%
P2-4	Very important. It is how we show God how much we love him.	1	25.00%
P2-5	Important, because I have a limited amount of time.	1	
P2-6	Important. I need to pray about the use of time in my life.	1	12.50%
P2-7	Very important. Our “chronos” is limited and “kairos” is eternal.	1	12.50%
P2-8	Very important. At times my calendar is filled for weeks and months on end. This often stresses me and my family. I find that I end up putting God first.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Wise Use of Time

In reference to the wise use of time, respondents were asked if they felt they were using time wisely. Seventy five percent (75.00%) of the sub-sample indicated they were using time wisely, while the remaining twenty five percent (25.00%) indicated that they were not. The comments made in response to the questions indicated that improvement was needed relative to the overall stewardship of time. Additionally, there is a sense of feeling “stretched” for time or being overextended. Table 44 provides summary information related to responses on the wise use of time.

Table 44. Summary of Response Relating to the Wise Use of Time

Respondent Code	Question/Response In your opinion, are you using your time wisely?	n	Percentage
P2-1 P2-3 P2-4	Yes.	3	37.50%
P2-2 P2-5	No.	2	25.00%
P2-6	Yes, but improvement is needed.	1	12.50%
P2-7	No, I am not using my time in the way it should be used. I am stretched too much for time.	1	12.50%
P2-8	No, but of recent my wife and I have been making efforts to change some things to make more time to work on our health, finances and getting rest.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Hindrances to Managing Time in a Biblical Manner

When asked about hindrances to the utilization of time in a manner prescribed in the Bible, respondents provided an array of answers. The responses formed two key themes: (1) over commitment from several sources; and (2) guilt from feeling that poor stewardship of time displeases God. One important realization that emanated from the responses was the acknowledgement that the respondents were over committed and exhibiting poor stewardship of time. Table 45 summarizes the responses related to hindrances to managing time in a biblical manner.

Table 45. Summary of Hindrances to Managing Time in a Biblical Manner

Respondent Code	Question/Response What appears to be your greatest hindrance to managing time in your life in a biblical manner?	n	Percentage
P2-1	Family commitments.	1	12.50%
P2-2	Too many commitments.	1	12.50%
P2-3	Overloading my schedule.	1	12.50%
P2-4	Nothing really, I just do what God asks.	1	12.50%
P2-5	Discipline and my schedule.	1	12.50%
P2-6	Health and dealing with stress.	1	12.50%
P2-7	Being over extended. I would like to devote more time to the study of scripture and evangelism.	1	12.50%
P2-8	I feel guilty when I say no, especially when it comes to being active in ministries. Now, I see how saying yes all the time also displeases God.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Action Toward Living the Abundant Life

Toward the end of transforming attitudes and behaviors related to time, participants were required to generate actions steps to assist in the transformation. Each of the respondents generated action steps.

As indicated in Table 46, there were a variety of actions steps proposed. The central themes of responses included the following: (1) getting organized to more effectively manage time; (2) learning to say “no” when appropriate; (3) do more teaching on the wise use of time; (4) self care in regard to the use of time; and (5) continued study of scripture related to time.

Table 46. Summary of Actions Related to the Management of Time Toward Living the Abundant Life

Respondent Code	Statement/Response	n	Percentage
	Based on the content of the teaching notes, my study of scripture, reflection and prayer, I am committing to do the following three things to help me better manage time in my life.		
P2-1	1. Learning to help myself as much as I help others	1	12.50%
	2. Saying no to others.		
	3. Not being so available to others.		
P2-2	1. Learning to help myself as much as I help others	1	12.50%
	2. Saying no to others.		
	3. Not being so available to others.		
P2-3	1. Try not to over commit	1	12.50%
	2. Pay attention to the stewardship of time.		
	3. Make sure I have quiet time.		
P2-4	1. I will do what God asks.	1	12.50%
P2-5	1. Be more disciplined by using my planner.	1	12.50%
	2. Using a "to do" list.		
	3. Limit television watching.		
P2-6	1. Seek information to improve time management.	1	12.50%
	2. Become better organized.		
	3. Eliminate distractions when possible.		
P2-7	1. I have recently purchased a book on how to gain control of my time to live a healthier lifestyle.	1	12.50%
	2. I need to develop a plan to study the Scriptures and prepare for evangelism.		
	3. I need to develop a plan to enhance my leisure opportunities and relax.		
P2-8	1. Not live by the calendar	1	12.50%
	2. Get organized.		
	3. Do not procrastinate.		
	Total	8	100.00%

Comments Related to Time

In regard to comments related to time, there were no comments made by the respondents.

Responses to Unit IV- Leisure

In this section respondents were asked to address questions about leisure. Qualitative responses are compiled in the sections featured below.

Belief of Scripture Related to Leisure

When asked whether respondents believe what the scriptures say about leisure, one hundred percent of the sub-sample indicated “yes.” There were no comments provided.

Importance of Leisure on the Faith Journey

Each member of the counseling group was asked about the importance of leisure on their faith journey. Each of the respondents indicated that leisure was a very important facet of their faith journey. Responses provided by group members denote that, (1) leisure is an important part of finding balance in life; (2) leisure is an important part of maintaining mental health; and (3) God advocates people having fun. The responses provided by the group affirm the high mean scores on the Leisure Ethic Scale (LES) and Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scale (TBALS). Table 47 features a summary of responses on the question of the importance of leisure as a part of the faith journey.

Table 47. Summary of Importance of Leisure as a Part of the Faith Journey

Respondent Code	Question/Response Based on your understanding of scripture presented in the teaching notes, how important is Christian leisure to your faith journey?	n	Percentage
P2-1 thru P2-5	Very important.	5	62.50%
P2-6	Very important. Christian leisure helps us to find balance in our lives.	1	12.50%
P2-7	Very important. I need some leisure time to keep my sanity.	1	12.50%
P2-8	Very important. It fulfills my life. It makes me stronger in faith knowing God laughs and wants and expects the same from us.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Setting Aside Time for Leisure

When members of the sub-sample were asked whether they set aside time for leisure in their lives, over eighty seven percent (87.50%) of the group indicated they had not set aside time to engage in leisure pursuits during the week. Only one group members indicated they had set aside time for leisure. Several respondents provided a rationale for the lack of leisure in their life. The primary reason for the dearth of leisure was the failure to designate time for leisure activities during the week. This fact may be attributed to the string work ethic of the group as evidenced by the responses to questions in the section of the Teaching Notes related to work. Table 48 provides a summary of responses related to setting aside leisure time during the week.

Table 48. Summary of Responses Related to Setting Aside Leisure Time

Respondent Code	Question/Response	n	Percentage
	Are you currently setting aside time for leisure during your week?		
P2-1	No.	3	37.50%
P2-2			
P2-5			
P2-3	No. I have to grow.	1	12.50%
P2-4	No, I take it when I can get it.	1	12.50%
P2-6	Yes, but formally scheduling time may be helpful.	1	12.50%
P2-7	No, I am not setting aside near as much time as I should.	1	12.50%
P2-8	No, I have not set any time aside, but we are working on it.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Hindrances to Leisure Time

Toward the end of identifying hindrances or barriers to leisure among the members of the counseling group, respondents were asked to identify specific barriers. Each of the respondents identified barriers which included the following: (1) work; (2) insufficient amounts of time for leisure; and (3) identifying activities that are “Godly.”

One possible explanation for the de-emphasis of leisure in the lives of the members of the counseling may lie in their work ethic. On the whole, the study population generated high mean scores on the Protestant Work Ethic Scale. Additionally, when the responses to the reflection questions on work are considered, the sub-sample again portrays a strong work ethic at the expense of leisure. Table 49 provides a summary of response related to hindrances to leisure time.

Table 49. Summary of Responses Related to Hindrances to Leisure Time

Respondent Code	Question/Response What appears to be your greatest hindrance to having adequate amounts of leisure time in your life?	n	Percentage
P2-1	Work and fatigue	1	12.50%
P2-2	Work.	1	12.50%
P2-3	Working too much and not taking time.	1	12.50%
P2-4	Having adequate amounts of time.	1	12.50%
P2-5	None.	1	
P2-6 and P2-7	Identifying activities that are Godly and acceptable. I need a partner for encouragement.	2	25.00%
P2-8	Schedule is full	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Conflicts Between Leisure Time and Activities and Church Teachings

One important aspect of assisting the counseling group was to aid them in identifying conflicts between leisure choices and church teachings, tradition and scripture. As noted in Table 50, the majority of the sub-sample (62.50%) reported that there were conflicts with church teaching and tradition. The primary source of conflict appeared to be church teaching on what was considered “Godly” leisure. There were few specific activities designated as sources of conflict with the exception of playing cards and gambling in general. The aforementioned statement is affirmed when the results of the Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scale (RBALS) is considered. One of the principle findings of the analysis was that the source of beliefs was personal as opposed to stemming from scripture or teaching by the church.

Table 50. Responses to Conflicts Related to Leisure Activities

Respondent Code	Question/Response	n	Percentage
	Are there any conflicts between what you enjoy as leisure time activities and church teaching, church traditions, or scripture?		
P2-1 P2-3 P2-8	No.	3	37.50%
P2-2	Yes, playing cards and gambling.	1	12.50%
P2-4	Understanding that God wants me to have fun also.	1	12.50%
P2-5	Yes. Trying to make sure my definition lines up with what God determines is “Godly” leisure.	1	
P2-6	Yes, what I have been taught in church over the years.	1	12.50%
P2-7	Not as an adult, but as a child there were several things I was told were not Godly.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Action Toward Living the Abundant Life

Each respondent provided a series of action steps that would assist them in incorporating leisure in their life. Withstanding the fact that every member of the group provided responses, there was an assortment of action steps generated. The action steps reported are clustered into five key strategies: (1) commit to having more fun and enjoyment; (2) find partners to engage in leisure activities with; (3) rest and make time for leisure; (4) limit work hours to facilitate leisure; and (5) study the Bible and what it says about leisure. Table 51 provides a detailed summary of responses generated to live a fuller life containing leisure.

Table 51. Actions Toward Living Abundant Living Related to Leisure

Respondent Code	Statement/Response	n	Percentage
	Based on the content of the teaching notes, my study of scripture, reflection and prayer, I am committing to do the following three things to help me better manage work in my life:		
P2-1	1. Find a fun hobby. 2. Got to bed earlier so that I will have the energy. 3. Limit my work hours and set boundaries	1	12.50%
P2-2	1. Not worry about what people think. 2. Be free to have fun. 3. Pay more attention to what the Bible says.	1	12.50%
P2-3	1. One day at a time. 2. Stop to take time. 3. Enjoy some of the things I used to do.	1	12.50%
P2-4	1. Focus more on leisure and play in my life.	1	12.50%
P2-5	2. Allow myself not to feel guilty about taking time from work 3. Commit to doing something fun and for my health each week.		
P2-6	1. Scheduling time for relaxation and constructive leisure 2. Teaching loved ones the importance of having leisure without feeling guilty. 3. Making a weekly commitment to do something fun and relaxing.	1	12.50%
P2-7	1. I am making a commitment to going out to play basketball once per week and attend high school games. 2. Find a partner to engage in leisure activities with. 3. Take more leisure related trips with my wife.	1	12.50%
P2-8	1. Commit to understanding what God says about leisure. 2. Involve my entire family in activities. 3. Find partners to do activities with.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

General Comments Related to Leisure

Of the eight members of the leisure counseling group only one provided comments on the topic of leisure. The sole commenter suggested that one must assume personal responsibility for leisure. Additionally, the church can also set aside time for its members to experience leisure together. Table 52 presents the sole comment related to leisure.

Table 52. Comments Related to Leisure

Respondent Code	Response	n	Percentage
P2-1 thru P2-7	NC	7	87.50%
P2-8	I now see that I can only have leisure if I make it that way. Although you can have your leisure time outside of your church, the church can also set aside time for leisure time for its congregation. I truly believe that those who pray together should have fun and relax together.	1	12.50%
	Total	8	100.00%

Summary of Data Analysis

The information appearing in the following paragraphs summarizes the key aspects of data analysis activity in Phases I and II. Additionally, a discussion of validation measure is rendered. Due to the abundance of information presented in this chapter only a summary of hypothesis testing and select qualitative findings are presented.

Validation Measures

To validate the methodology and procedures and validate data collected, a series of meetings were held with context associates, members of the leisure counseling group, and professional associates during the study. Comments from the contextual associates included the following statements:

1. The questionnaire was really long. It could have been shortened in some areas.
2. Some of the demographic data asked for made a few people uncomfortable, particularly when income level was asked for.
3. A few typographical errors were found in the questionnaire.
4. It would have been nice to have pastoral teachings on the topics in the survey before the survey was administered.
5. This was a good study and the results must be shared with the church.

Additionally, members of the leisure counseling provided the following comments:

1. The scriptures used in the pre-test and post-test instrument should have been distributed prior to the pre-test to help with developing the biblical context for the statements.
2. The Teaching Notes were excellent and very thought provoking. A class should be developed to help people with these issues.
3. Further discussion of Sabbath and how to apply it in real life should be given.

Finally, comments obtained from the researcher's professional associates included the following:

1. The study is valuable and will serve as a foundation for future research and publication in professional journals.

2. Not much has been written in this area, especially when it comes to congregation life.
3. The questionnaire was well structure. Condense the area in which the demographic data is collected. Make sure that the reliability sub-scales within the document is checked.
4. The idea of a leisure counseling group is good and it will serve as a validation tool for the data collected from the general study population.

The researcher utilized the validation comments to aid in defining the methodological path of the study but also to reflect upon the similarities in data collected in Phases I and II of the study.

Re-Statement of the Summary of Hypothesis Testing

The following is a brief summary of the findings of the statistical tests conducted on the study hypotheses:

- H₁: The null hypothesis was not rejected. Sabbath Belief and Practices Scores (SBPS) were not significantly different for respondents when length of membership in the congregation was taken into account.
- H₂: The null hypothesis was not rejected. Belief About Time Scores (SBPS) were not significantly different for respondents based on being active in church ministry.
- H₃: The null hypothesis was not rejected. Work Ethic Scores (WES) were not significantly different for respondents when their income category was considered.
- H₄: The null hypothesis was rejected. In summary, the Theological Beliefs About Work Scores (TBAWS) were significantly different for respondents when their occupational categories were taken into account.
- H₅: The null hypothesis was rejected. Leisure Ethic Scores (WES) were significantly different for respondents when the age category of respondents was taken into account.

H₆: The null hypothesis was rejected. Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scores (TBALS) are significantly different for respondents when the age category of respondents was taken into account

H₇: The null hypothesis was rejected. Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scores (RBALS) were significantly different for respondents when length of church membership was taken into account.

H₈: The null hypothesis was not rejected. Pretest and posttest scores on the Scriptural Beliefs About Work and Leisure Scale (SBAWLS) were not significantly different for respondents in the leisure counseling group.

Summary of Key Leisure Counseling Observations

Listed below is short list of observations extracted from leisure counseling efforts in Phase II of the study.

1. The members of the counseling group believe scripture related to work and deem work as an important aspect of their faith journey.
2. The greatest hindrances to working in a biblically prescribed manner are organization and managing time.
3. All of the members of the counseling believe what scripture indicates related to Sabbath. Additionally, efforts are being made to heighten the importance of Sabbath in their lives and to take part in Sabbath-keeping.
4. The stewardship of time is important to each member of the group. The general consensus is that more work is needed on being a wise steward of time.
5. One of the key barriers to the wise stewardship of time is taking on too many work and church related commitments.

6. The group on the whole did not make time for leisure in their lives. The entire group proposed action steps ranging from scheduling time for leisure to finding a partner to recreate with, as a means to have more leisure.
7. The primary barrier to leisure was not an institutional constraint, but the constraints noted were occupational and behavioral in nature..

Having completed the analysis of data for the study, the researcher now transitions to a discussion related to the development of a theologically based leisure and work ethic which is found in Chapter Six. This chapter is essential to establishing solutions to the problems associated with the healthy discussion of work, Sabbath, time, and leisure within the context.

CHAPTER SIX

DEVELOPING A THEOLOGY AND ETHIC OF WORK AND LEISURE

Introduction

Pursuant to interests of the researcher, the needs of the context, references in the literature review and the results of the field experience, there is a need to address the matter of developing a theology and ethic related to work and leisure. As noted in Chapter One where the overview of the context is presented, information about work and leisure emanates from the Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, the Bible and pastoral teachings. This section focuses on what has been written related to the on-going development of a theology and ethic of work and leisure which are grounded in Bible truths. The hope for the context is that serious attention will be given to the development of both a correct theology and ethic for work and leisure. Additionally, this section addresses the church's role in espousing a theology of work and leisure through doctrine and Christian education initiatives.

Development of a Theology of Leisure

In the development of a theology of leisure, a Christian view of leisure begins with the biblical account of creation. After God performed the work of creation, the Creator rested and was refreshed (Ex. 31:17, NRSV). We can find here a creation

ordinance that prescribes periodic cessation from work as a necessary part of life. The idea of the Sabbath reinforces this. According to the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, “Six days you shall labour and do all your work; but the seventh day ... you shall not do any work” (Ex. 20:9-10). Here is the God-intended balance, a harmonious rhythm in which work and leisure are equally important.

The command to cease from work also appears in the Old Testament system of religious festivals. Agricultural based societies followed a designated schedule of religious festivals that included and ensured days free from work (e.g. - Num 28:18, 25, 26; Lev 25). The idea of physical and spiritual rest for the individual and land is deeply ingrained in the biblical consciousness, as are festivity and celebration. In the New Testament, we look to the example of Jesus who confirms the aforementioned statements. During his extraordinarily busy public ministry, Jesus, on several occasions found time to withdraw (Mt 41:23; Mk 6:46; Lk 5:16; 6:12; 9:10). According to the Gospels, one of his favorite activities was socializing with friends and acquaintances at dinner parties. On one occasion he commanded his disciples to stop ministering to the needs of the crowd and spend time refreshing themselves (Mk 6:30-32). Jesus did not confine life to ceaseless work and evangelism. The Bible records the fact that he took time to contemplate the beauty of the lilies and commanded his followers to do likewise (Mt 6:28). Rest, relax and actively or passively engage in leisure.

The Christian doctrine of stewardship also under girds a Christian view of leisure. Stewardship means honoring God with all that is entrusted to a person – time, ability and materials. The Bible calls upon all people to be “wise stewards” of that which God has set us over. As stewards, Christians are as accountable for their leisure time as they are

for their work. Christian apologists for leisure have traditionally drawn a link between worship and leisure. While the two cannot simply be equated, the worship that God prescribes as part of life provides a rationale for seeing the value of leisure as well. The common ground between worship and leisure includes cessation from work, momentary renunciation of the acquisitive urge, contemplation, shared community, renewal, and the recovery of values. God through Christ created us anew to be whole. Christ instituted the abundant life. Many creeds express that the purpose and chief end of life is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. This enjoyment is a crucial aspect of our faith and is expressed through play, celebration, fun, recreation, and other forms of leisure. To be recreated is to be free to have a wholesome relationship with God to experience the abundant life in all aspects of our existence.

Leisure “time” has eluded society. Because of the work ethic, or the effects of the advertising medium, most of us are harried more than ever and cannot find “free time.” It is against this backdrop of the work ethic and the resulting struggle with time schedules that we consider leisure from another perspective. The dictionary definition of leisure does not do justice to the Christian concept relating to wholeness. Leisure defined as free and unoccupied time in which a person may indulge in rest and recreation would tend to view leisure as a quantity of time. This is unfortunate because most of us do not have “free or unoccupied time.” With whatever unobligated time there is, a pressing concern becomes developing criteria for making careful and creative choices among the many alternatives which we do have, in order that our faith is reflected in those choices. Our concern for leisure then relates to qualitative segments of life. Reflecting upon the details of our faith, we conclude that all of our time is free time. All of life is given and

redeemed by God. We do not earn it and it is intended to be received and shared freely. On the other hand, none of it is free. It is all committed to God, whether at work or play. The Christian is not fragmented but lives in both total freedom and total responsibility.

From a Christian perspective, what then is leisure? Kathy A. Gingrich in her article *A Theology of Leisure* provides a quotation from Gordon Dahl which may answer the question from a Christian perspective. Dahl states: “A Christian experiences “leisure” when he comes into full awareness of the freedom he has in Christ, freedom not only from fear and guilt because of sin, but even more important, freedom to be and become the New Man after Christ’s own example.”¹ Leisure relates more to free spirit than free time. In essence it represents a quality and style of life rather than a fragment of time, thus it can be experienced either at work or at play. Gingrich uses an important statement by psychologist John Neulinger to buttress her argument. Neulinger says about leisure: “Leisure is a way of being at peace with what one is doing.”² A comment provided by Joseph Gates and referred to by Gingrich notes: “God created the earth, its creatures and man, not for his work but for his leisure. There is the assurance that God as revealed in Jesus Christ desires that we enjoy an abundant life – not solely in terms of things but in rich experiences.”³

Gingrich also references a comment by William Stevenson, from his article *Are We Ready for Leisure?* Gingrich notes Stevenson as commenting: “. . . the man of faith God . . . is able to approach his leisure with a spirit of affirmation, celebration and

¹ Kathy A. Gingrich, *A Theology of Leisure*, *Brethren Life and Thought*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1, (Oak Brook, IL: Brethren Journal Association, 1979), 53.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

freedom.”⁴ Throughout the course of history, worship was celebration, entered into freely, expressed through songs, prayers, dances, images, and storytelling. Feast days kept the faith alive. A leisure relationship is closely akin to worship. Jesus illustrated this concept when he visited Mary and Martha. The Lord noted that Martha was working and worrying about many things while Mary had chosen that good portion of enjoying his presence while in a leisurely state. Leisure is a crucial element in the work, play, and worship rhythm of life.

In our spirituality, not only should we remove the dualisms of male or female, mind or body, but we can also consider the need to let go of the separation of work and play. A traditional legalistic spirituality that dwells on sin demands that we forego sense driven pleasures that are grounded in the body. What is needed is a holistic theology of work and leisure, which affirms a sense based spirituality. David danced before the Lord (II Sam. 6:14). Jesus ate and drank wine at the wedding feast at Cana (Jn 2:1). God has not cut us off from pleasure; we have done so ourselves, denying our divinity and fearing that if we let out feelings of pleasure, they will become uncontrollable; we like to be in control. The task at hand should be determining whether we have discovered our leisure-based needs, and, if not, discover a means of fulfilling them so that we can enjoy our work, our ministry, with our whole minds, bodies, and spirits. As the Westminster Shorter Catechism says, “The chief end of humans is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.”

⁴ Ibid.

Theology, Work, Leisure and the Market Ethos

In the twenty-first century, Christian theology has marginally addressed the theological and spiritual significance of work and leisure as well the numerous moral issues pertaining to faith and work. This task includes, at a rudimentary level, developing a coherent theology or spirituality of work, which first describes beliefs, values, and attitudes and then applies them to the social practices of work and leisure. It is the religious practices of the church that embody, reinforce, and translate Christian beliefs, values, and attitudes into the social practices of our daily activities. As a result, theology becomes directly linked with ecclesial practices that redefine the daily activity of work and leisure, Christians will continue to perceive such activities as defined by the hegemonic social practices of the market ethos.

Over the last three decades, a rather optimistic ecumenical portrayal of work and leisure has emerged. These espoused “theologies of work,” are typically grounded in the doctrines of creation, anthropology, or eschatology, and should not, however, lose contact with the longer tradition’s dialectical vision of work and leisure. For instance, Francis Schussler Fiorenza in “*Work and Critical Theology*” guardedly reminds us, “This vision (of work and leisure) has two roles: positivity and relativity. Each must be kept in constant balance. To lose the balance is to lose the vision.”⁵ In the post-modern era, theology has often deviated from the former “positive-yet-relative” notion of human activity by focusing primarily on the sacredness either of work or of leisure (rest or play). Rejecting this ambivalent vision, some theologians either disparage human labor by

⁵ Francis Schussler Fiorenza, “Work and Critical Theology,” in *A Matter of Dignity: Inquiries into the Humanization of Work*, ed. W. J. Heisler and John W. Houck (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), 39.

claiming that its significance, meaning, and purpose occurs only in the activity of leisure or play or, more commonly, collapse leisure into work by “sacramentalizing” and “absolutizing” the activity of work. It stands to reason that if the first errs by degrading work and overvaluing leisure, then the second errs by degrading leisure and overvaluing work.⁶ In opposition to these contrasting views, the mainstream vision offers a more balanced, comprehensive, and sensitive account of human activity, affirming both work and leisure as fundamental, meaningful, and purposeful activities of human existence, yet this perspective also cautions against absolutizing either one or both activities into sacred or profane categories. Additionally, a balanced Christian worldview of work and leisure must not only affirm this important theological vision, but also critically evaluate contemporary forms of praxis with the goal of transforming human understanding of work and the structures of the workplace. It must provide both descriptions and applications.

In his widely read book *Work in the Spirit*, contemporary Protestant theologian Miroslav Volf imaginatively correlates the four fundamental human needs realized in “good leisure” with the four fundamental attributes of “good work.”⁷ At the core of Christian existence are not just novel spiritual attitudes, ethical particularities, or anticipations of future restoration, but also the insistence that communion with God is the most fundamental need of all persons. This need correlates with the principle that sustains all work or leisure, which is the pneumatological doctrine of “work in the Spirit.” A pneumatological understanding of work is preferable to “vocation” or “calling” because it

⁶ Ibid., 34-38.

⁷ Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 152-154.

puts a synchronic and diachronic plurality of jobs or employments in the framework of concern for the common good.⁸ The second human need is solidarity with nature and its extremely important related principle of ecological stewardship. The third need is for community and the well-being of others, which leads to the principle of justice and sustaining the common good. The fourth and final need identified by Volf is the human need for personal development of one's skills and abilities, which reinforces the moral principle that all work should be humane and contribute to human dignity.⁹ Since work and leisure are not bi-polar in nature but are interdependent and intertwined activities, it is highly possible to reform and transform work by making it more humane, which is germane to the tenets of "good leisure."

Logically, it follows that such theologies of work, when applied to social and economic problems, makes normative claims about "good" and "bad" forms of work and leisure. "Theology refuses to accept the market's uncritical acceptance of the instrumental value of work, disproportionate kinds and qualities of work, worker dissatisfaction, unemployment and homelessness, and the exploitation of persons, communities, and nature for short-term economic efficiency and enlightened self-interest. Instead, a theology of work claims that all human labor has intrinsic value and dignity; that the definition of "work" extend beyond simply gainful employment; that worker alienation is objectively caused by sinful hegemonic social and economic structures; that all persons have a right to work and rest; that the economy be structured to serve both

⁸ Ibid., 102-117.

⁹ Ibid.

short-term and long-term personal and communal needs; and that work and leisure sustain the intrinsic value of persons, community, and nature.”¹⁰

Since Christian theology does not operate in a vacuum, then, it must critically investigate the hegemonic societal structures that manipulate religious evaluations and descriptions. Again, Francis Schussler Fiorenza brings to bear the fact that the critical task of theology is “to reflect upon how societal structures of domination have not only affected the conditions of work, but have permeated the religious evaluation of work in concrete situations.”¹¹ This critical task is twofold: first, it engages in social analysis so that it may define contemporary hegemonic societal structures and narratives; and second, it determines whether such social structures are present in Christian beliefs and practices.

The first critical task engages in social analysis so that it may effectively describe the contemporary socio-cultural milieu of work and leisure. The language of personal activity, particularly in American society, is dominated by social structures of the market ethos, which espouses the narratives of individual success, therapeutic well-being, and the fixation of accumulation of commodities. Sociologist Alan Wolfe indicates, whereas previous generations juxtaposed, the moral language and obligations of the market with those present in the family and community. In contemporary American culture, his division has collapsed into one culturally dominant tradition, that of the “market-as-society” or the market ethos. Wolfe notes:

¹⁰ David W. Haddorff, “Theology and the Market Ethos: Toward an Ecclesial Understanding of Work and Leisure,” *Union Seminary Quarterly*, 50, no. 1 (1996): 85-86.

¹¹ Francis Schussler Fiorenza, “Religious Beliefs and Praxis: Reflections on Catholic Theological Views of Work,” in *Work and Religion*, ed. Gregory Baum (New York: Seabury Press, 1980), 92-102.

An older generation, fearful of economic insecurity it felt when young, took refuge from the economy in civil society. Long marriages, whether satisfying or not, were combined with relatively stable communities and commitment to the expansion of the public sector, all to create a system in which people could to some degree rely on another for support. For a younger generation, by contrast, the market, rather than something against which individuals would be protected by civil society, has become more of a model by which relations in civil society can themselves be shaped. Marriage and childbearing are shaped increasingly by considerations of self-interest; communities are organized more by the logic of buying and selling than by principles of solidarity; and services, when no longer satisfactory publicly, are increasingly purchased privately. In a way unprecedented in American experience, the market has become attractive in not only the economic sphere, but in the moral and social spheres as well.¹²

Moreover, the market reinterprets the meaning and purpose of work as either a “job” or a “career,” which reduces human activity to the practice of commodity exchange. Unlike a “calling” or “vocation,” which links personal work with one’s moral and spiritual obligations to one’s family, community, and God, the sole meaning of a “job” is its instrumental and remunerative value that one receives from its wages, perks, and other benefits. Nevertheless, in order to elude the harsh realization that one’s work is simply a job, persons attempt to enhance their identity, self-esteem, and psychologically based rewards through the activity of a “career” or a “profession.” Yet, even career-oriented persons objectify their job satisfaction by its produced material or psychic assets, so in the end, the more lucrative, successful, or personally fulfilling the career, the better the career. The logic within the marketplace mandates that persons be commodities of their work, so that their “exchange value” is measured by what goods, services, ideas, and relationships they create and produce. Both persons and their activities of work and

¹² Alan Wolfe, *Whose Keeper? Social Science and Moral Obligation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 76.

leisure are denigrated to market commodities.¹³

Moreover, the influence of the market reinforces consumptive behavior when it integrates personal happiness not with the activity of work but with the leisurely activity of consumption. Although, in some cases, workers desire more leisure time to enjoy the rewards of labor, they continue to work more hours, finding less satisfaction with both their work and their personal lives. Higher rates of consumption foster not only the habitual practice of consumption but the necessity to increase working hours to keep pace with social and technological demands of the market. When persons decrease leisure time they become more dissatisfied with their work and their personal lives. As Harvard economist Juliet Schor notes: “We are not merely caught in a pattern of spend-and-spend, the problem identified by many critics of consumer culture. The whole story is that we work, and spend, and work and spend some more.”¹⁴ Schor implies that this pattern becomes a “vicious cycle” of “keeping up with the Joneses” which ultimately leads to “unhealthy” praxis related to both work and leisure. Unlike the market’s preoccupation with individual freedom, this social pattern is proliferated principally by business and economic structures, which leave individuals incapable of challenging the social practice of “work-and-spend” that instrumentalizes both work and leisure.

Philosopher Albert Borgmann, much like Juliet Schor, argues that work and leisure are dominated by the hyperactivity of “commodious individualism.”¹⁵ Although the hyperactive pace of work in our contemporary economy is grounded in the historical

¹³ Robert Bellah et.al., *Habits of the Heart* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), 65-71.

¹⁴ Juliet B. Schor, *The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), 125.

¹⁵ Albert Borgmann, *Crossing the Post-Modern Divide* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 37-47

narrative of “success” and “rugged individualism,” this story fails to keep pace with the more culturally dominant practice of commodity exchange. Indeed, individual behavior is socially embodied in the practices of commodity exchange; human nature is defined by the market ethos. Hence, it is our practice of hyperactive consumption that drives our practice of hyperactive work. As Borgmann denotes: “Hyperactivity not only has its backside of leisure, it also has its underside of unloved labor and sullen leisure.”¹⁶ The market determines that persons respond to hyperactive work either with a similar, unsustainable frenzied leisure or, more commonly, with a profound hatred of both activities, and then retreat into the luring glamour of “hyper-reality” as found in television, movies, video games, and computers. For many, the hurried pace of hyperactive work reduces leisure to inactive consuming activities such as watching entertainment or shopping instead of active pastimes that foster self-development of personal skills, talents, or abilities.¹⁷ This also applies to the stifling of spiritual development within the context of leisure.

The question still remains whether such socio-cultural patterns can be found in Christian beliefs and practices. David W. Haddorff suggests that the second critical task of theology, forces the following question: Do Christians, with their alternative narratives, beliefs, and practices, interpret their actual practice of work and leisure any differently from the rest of society, which is dominated by the market ethos?¹⁸ In *God and Mammon in America*, Robert Wuthnow responds to this critical line of inquiry.

¹⁶ Ibid., 101.

¹⁷ Ibid., 111-112.

¹⁸ Haddorff, 89.

Wuthnow arrives at the conclusion that although some theologically informed believers question the presumptions of the status quo, most, in fact, embody the same beliefs and practices of the surrounding culture. Not surprisingly, most American Christians refuse or are unable to challenge the cultural dominance of the market ethos.¹⁹ Wuthnow further warns that “even when Believers attempt to offer a distinct vision and avoid market language, the predominance of therapeutic language in their discourse redefines their beliefs in light of the subjective and psychological factors of personal well-being and happiness. Christian morality becomes linked with secular languages of emotivism and utilitarian individualism.”²⁰

The vital point of this analysis is not to claim that most believers are uneducated in theology, consciously immoral, or unfaithful to the church’s social teachings, but to insist that until Christian beliefs about work and leisure are actually embodied in both ecclesial and daily social practices they will only remain theoretical constructs which will remain severed from their daily lives. It is unreasonable to assume that a coherent theological description of theological convictions, values, or attitudes and their application to current economic and social situations, will directly cause a reform of societal attitudes about work and leisure. As Stanley Hauerwas in *Work and Co-Creation: A Critique of a Remarkably Bad Idea* states, “the church is crucial for sustaining work not because it can provide a philosophy of work, but because it is a group of actual people who have learned to rely on one another, to depend on one another.”²¹

¹⁹ Robert Wuthnow, *God and Mammon in America* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 5.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

Foundations for the Development of a Christian Leisure Ethic

As we struggle to review the tangible evidence before us, what is apparent is that we are on the threshold of the emergence of a leisure ethic. This new ethic is not wholly in opposition to the traditional work ethic, nor does it subvert it. It is an ethic which is cognizantly chosen by Americans, many of whom are practicing, faithful Christians. Akin to the work ethic, the leisure ethic has significant religious, spiritual and economic implications. This burgeoning ethic is grounded in the spiritual, economic, social and political behaviors of humanity. Gordon Dahl calls this paradigm shift a “new consciousness,” a “new naturalism” even a “new Reformation,” which cannot be ignored.²²

A theology of leisure informs one’s thinking about leisure and declares its necessity. The ethics of leisure must inform the practice of leisure. Christians and society on the whole can begin by positioning leisure in relation to some common ethical viewpoints. A strong utilitarian ethic will either portray leisure as being useless, or it will value leisure only as it contributes to work. For some critics of leisure, an ethic of self-denial will discourage leisure because leisure is by its very nature a form of self-indulgence. On the positive side, leisure thrives in a context of enjoying life’s simple, God-given pleasures and humanism (in the traditional sense of affirming human fulfillment as a value). A Christian leisure evolves when there is an acknowledgment of

²¹ Stanley Hauerwas, “Work as Co-Creation: A Critique of a Remarkably Bad Idea,” in *Co-Creation and Capitalism: John Paul II’s Laborem Exercens*, ed. John W. Houck and Oliver F. Williams, C.S.C. (Washington, D.C.: University of America Press, 1983), 51.

²² Gordon J. Dahl, “The Emergence of a Leisure Ethic,” *The Christian Century*, 89, no. 1 (1972), 1124.

the “gift” of leisure and its source, and when society understands the stewardship responsibilities that accompany the “gift.”

To begin with, Christianity does not reduce life to the utilitarian. The world that God created is more than utilitarian. When God established the perfect human environment, the Source created trees that were not only ‘good for food’ (a utilitarian criterion) but also “pleasing to the eye” (Gen 2:9). Jesus warned against the tyranny of the utilitarian and the acquisitive spirit in his discourse against anxiety (Mt 6:25-34).

An element of tension enters the picture when we consider the strong element of self-denial (Mk 8:34) and the sense of duty that are at the heart of Christianity. But the Bible equally embraces pleasure and enjoyment. The most extended discussion comes in the book of Ecclesiastes. Although this book takes a dim view of the purely human pursuit of pleasure “under the sun,” it repeatedly praises the ideal of pleasure-seeking within a God-centered framework (e.g. Eccl 2:24-26; 3:11-13; 5:18-19).

The New Testament counterpart of this zestful endorsement of enjoyment is Paul’s comment that God “richly furnishes us with everything to enjoy” (I Tim 6:17, NRSV). A Christian leisure ethic is also rooted in an affirmation of human creaturehood. Jesus’ redemptive purpose is to enable people to have “life . . . to the full” (Jn 10:10). To be ethical, an activity must respect the end or *telos* of a thing – the purpose for which it as created and towards which it tends. If God’s purpose for every person’s life is a full life, the self-fulfillment that is at the heart of leisure will be zestfully and gratefully received as part of God’s good provision.

Leisure did not escape the effects of the Fall. In fact, a society’s leisure seems often to provide heightened scope for its immoral tendencies. A Christian leisure ethic

always subjects leisure to ordinary moral tests. The abuse of leisure occurs when people make an idol of it, when they fill it with immoral activities, when they transform it into selfish indulgence, and when they neglect duty. The paradox which comes with the gift of leisure is that it is a gift from God and blessing, but yet can also be viewed as a curse when abused. The abuse of leisure should not lead Christians to reject leisure itself as worldly or immoral. “Rather, a Christian’s leisure is most completely moral when it is thoughtfully chosen, when it meets Christian goals, and when it fosters godly self-fulfillment in a person’s life.”²³

Despite the arguments by some critics that a leisure ethic will force the manifestation of an urge for instant gratification, the positive arguments in support of a leisure ethic are stronger. Gordon Dahl writes in “*The Emergence of a Leisure Ethic*,” that a leisure ethic can direct us into uncharted experiences and discoveries of “brotherhood and neighborhood,” which will enhance our enjoyment of life.²⁴ Dahl proposes that the leisure ethic contains five discernible elements. “It is based on a radical affirmation of personal freedom, the inherent dignity and uniqueness of every human being. It presupposes a pluralistic system of values and promotes a wide diversity of life styles. It compels the integrity, but dispels the permanence, of human relationships and replaces narrow group loyalties with more ecumenical attitudes and interests. It prefers immediate satisfaction to promises of future happiness. And it advances the interdependence of men and groups instead of their independence and competition.”²⁵ At

²³ R. K. Johnston, “Leisure” in *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics & Pastoral Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 547-548.

²⁴ Gordon J. Dahl, “The Emergence of a Leisure Ethic,” *The Christian Century*, 89, no. 1, (1972): 1127.

²⁵ Ibid.

first glance, some Christians may find it difficult to affirm the aforementioned elements of the leisure ethic. But on the contrary, it may be increasingly difficult to ignore or deny them. The potential problems are realistic, but can be managed within the bounds of Christian liberty and restraint. With proper stewardship the new leisure ethic brings with a host of redemptive possibilities.

Leisure and Creation Spirituality

Leisure and spirituality are inextricably tied together. At the point where the two theologically concepts converge, creativity is found. Spirituality may be defined as “a way of living in depth (Matthew Fox)” or “a path to individuation wherein one discovers one’s potential through affective and cognitive means by bringing into consciousness aspects of the unconscious which gives meaning to life.”²⁶ “Spirituality facilitates vital living. A spirituality that has as its basis the belief that humans are created good, in the image of God, is a vital spirituality, because it is centered on God’s good creation and continuing creation.”²⁷ One might argue that through the spiritual dimension of being at rest (physically and spiritually), in leisure, one is “re-created” and thus engaged in creative leisure.

Creation spirituality embodies emotions, play, and thus leisure. Too often, it seems, leisure becomes time away from work, filled with activities and the same kind of achievement-oriented competition we endure in our work worlds. Time for leisure is the latest “catch” word. One of the reasons that people talk about leisure to such an extent is

²⁶ Gwen L. Wright, “Spirituality and Creative Leisure,” *Pastoral Psychology*, 32, no. 3, (1984): 193.

²⁷ Ibid.

because many have become cognizant of the great stresses of life in Western society. Stress is manifested in the busyness of contemporary life. It is also apparent in the fact that we have become truncated from our roots as persons, because we have become mechanized in the ways we live and work. Leisure as a creative process, as openness to the world, facilitates our ability to balance our living between play and work. Leisure is a way of life wherein we are open to the possibilities in all human beings, and within this kind of spirituality, leisure is the ability to be spontaneous, open to both affective and cognitive experiences, and to facilitate this openness in other human beings, as well as in ourselves.²⁸

John Oswalt, in his book *The Leisure Crisis: A Biblical Perspective on Guilt-Free Leisure*, also wrestles with the question of creation, spirituality and leisure. Oswalt attempts to summarize what the Bible say about leisure or in a round-about manner asks the question, “What does God say about leisure?” He derives his ideas from the Biblical doctrine of creation, which he calls “the fundamental doctrine of the Bible.” He concludes that God has created everything, then everything has a purpose (Eccl 3:1-8), a design appropriate to it, a meaning to the various ups and downs in life, and God’s freedom to accomplish his own end. If human beings are made in the image of God, and if creativity is an integral part of God’s divine nature, it follows too, humanity should enjoy creative labor. Oswalt also draws the conclusion that humanity must engage in Sabbath rest and our divine purpose is to mimic God.²⁹ A comparable sentiment is written by Ronald H. Stone in *The Divine Imperative* where he states: “One use of leisure

²⁸ Ibid., 196-200.

²⁹ John Oswalt, *The Leisure Crisis: A Biblical Perspective on Guilt-Free Leisure* (Wheaton: Victor, 1987), 83-92.

time is thus to find ourselves free to reassure the ways in which life has been good to us.”³⁰ What Stone implies in his statement is that Christians must appropriate time to pause and reflect upon the divine infusion of blessings into our daily living, and we do this through the hallowed use of leisure.

Barriers to the Development of a Christian Leisure Ethic

Christians in Western society are beginning to recognize the need for a theology of leisure and play, but only the general outlines of that theology seem to be available now. There are a number of barriers which stand in the path of the development of a Christian leisure ethic. Many of them are self-imposed based on traditional doctrinal teachings, while others are created and defined by social scientists who operationalize the language of leisure sciences.

First, there is a complexity in defining leisure, which can be directly attributed to the multiplicity of available definitions of the term. For example, leisure may be seen as that part of a person’s life that is not devoted to subsistence. However, such available time is probably better called discretionary time, since leisure involves a state of mind. Leisure cannot be imposed but must arise from personal desire. Genuine leisure is possible regardless of socioeconomic status. Since most Westerners have been lifted above the poverty line in modern times, the reality of leisure has become an issue to encounter and subsequently leisure-based industries have emerged exponentially in contemporary times. There is not merely the leisure of those who are in paid employment, but there is the leisure of the growing number of those who have retired from paid employment and expect to live long lives. It has been rightly observed that,

³⁰ Stone, 64.

from a mental and emotional standpoint, we have not fully accepted our new leisure for what it is, namely, an opportunity to do and enjoy, a chance to realize the full benefits to be derived from the leisure we have now and will have subsequently in even greater abundance.

Second, a positive attitude to, and use of, leisure in order to relax and to play will necessarily be integrated to a positive attitude to work. Certain attitudes are satisfactory, such as, “Work is no more than a necessary means for living. What makes life worth living is the enjoyment of leisure”; and “Work is work and pleasure is pleasure and should not be mixed.” The better approach would seem to be that of, “Work makes leisure pleasurable, and leisure gives new energy to work. Thus one should work faithfully and enjoy leisure.”

Third, the biblical basis for a theology of leisure seems not yet to be fully articulated. In his article on leisure in the *Encyclopedia of Biblical and Christian Ethics*, R. K. Johnston points to the rest of the Sabbath, the advice of Ecclesiastes, the portrayal of human love in the Song of Songs, the festivals and celebrations of Israel, and the practice of friendship by Jesus (which included leisure time shared with the disciples and friends) as important biblically-oriented events related to leisure.³¹ These portrayals may be deemed as positive or negative depending on what side of the leisure question one is postured.

Revolutionary technological developments have led many people to suggest that America is entering an era of unprecedented leisure. Careful examination of the work life, spending patterns, and free time choices of twenty-first century Americans, however,

³¹ R.K. Johnston, “Leisure” in *Encyclopedia of Biblical and Christian Ethics* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1987), 229-230.

suggests that in reality leisure is not nearly so abundant nor highly esteemed as some people suppose. A Christian ethic of leisure cannot be developed without an examination and evaluation of the forces blocking the emergence of leisure in contemporary American society. William P.H. Stevenson, Jr. in his doctoral dissertation summary brings forth two hypotheses related to providing an explanation of the low estate of leisure in America today. They are as follows:

Leisure is blocked by the dominance of certain value orientations in the society. Utilitarianism and a materialistic conception of the good life are central factors in the negation of leisure. Advertising, want creations, synthetic demand, and the growth orientation of the industrial system are also potent forces eclipsing an ideal of leisure. Christian anthropology suggests that these value orientations and social structures are based upon deficient views of man.

Leisure is resisted because the freedom inherent in leisure constitutes a threat to those who lack security of self. Persons who lack this security are compelled to cover inner unrest by various non-leisure devices such as compulsive work and compulsive play. The capacity and the incapacity for leisure are rooted ultimately in the faith stance of the individual. The man who gains his sense of meaning and significance from idolatrous faith in such things as material possessions must be forever frantic in securing his security. He can have no leisure. But the man who trusts in God as the source of meaning and significance is able to let himself be in leisure. He is liberated from the need to secure his life by work fanaticism. He is liberated from the need to flee meaninglessness by play fanaticism.³²

Stevensons' hypotheses serve to buttress the previous discussion about barriers to the development of a leisure ethic and also strike at the heart of the issue of leisure, freedom and our capacity to rest in Christ.

When people find time for leisure, a multitude of problems persist. To begin, society is typically troubled by the poor choices that are made in using leisure time.

³² William P.H. Stevenson, Jr., "In Pursuit of Leisure" (Ph.D. diss, The Theology School, Drew University, 1970), 47-48.

Leisure for many has become trivialized. Secondly, as we move forward in the twenty-first century, we are still distressed over the feeling of guilt acquired from having leisure in our lives. For many the incongruity between work and leisure has not been properly reconciled. Many who feel guilty over having too much leisure time also feel guilty about excessive work habits. The problem is paradoxical in nature. Lastly is the issue of leisure becoming an idol for a segment of the population. In some cases, people become entrenched in the attitude of the “endless weekend.” At the core of the problem is excess and how to guard against it.

Many leisure theorists such as Leland Ryken suggest that the problems of guilt and properly managing work and leisure are formulated in Christian teachings, beliefs and behaviors relative to both work and leisure. Subsequently many Christians find themselves in a “time bind” or time famine.” “The time famine is intensified by the usual round of religious activities. By the time we factor in church attendance, Bible studies, devotional activities, committee work, and volunteer service, time that might have been spent on leisure goes to Christian causes.”³³ A *Christianity Today* survey in 1991 disclosed that Christian leaders spend nearly 25 percent less time in leisure activities than does society at large.³⁴ Ryken further insists that we do not totally discard the Protestant work ethic, but we advocate for a balanced ethic of both work and leisure.

Clearly, Scripture tells us that God desires us to work and be productive in our work, but also mandates that we rest and engage in leisure. More often than not, Christians become entrapped within the polarity of beliefs surrounding self-indulgence and the responsibility to deny self. As a function of this complex dilemma guilt arises.

³³ Leland Ryken, “Teach Us to Play, Lord,” *Christianity Today*, 35, no. 6, (1991): 20.

³⁴ Ibid.

Work, nor leisure, is complete in itself. The two compliment and enhance one another. Entering into leisure should be guilt free. A balance must be constructed between self-denial and enjoyment. On the whole, the Christian community has failed to practice and proclaim the direly needed doctrine of balance which our faith espouses.

Incarnational Theology, Work and Leisure

Every Christian must address the dilemma between work and leisure. David Moberg of Marquette University in his monograph, *Inasmuch: Christian Social Responsibility in the Twentieth Century*, insists that “A Christian theology of leisure is greatly needed to influence individual and social adjustments to the growth of leisure time in the modern world.”³⁵ To put it mildly, a Christian theology of work is also needed. But even before one speaks to the construction of a systematic theology of leisure or of work in modern times, the incarnational theology must say something very clearly to the Protestant work-ethic. The incarnational theology affirms the humanity of Christ in that He was one who labored but also one who practiced leisure in its various forms. Victor F. Hoffmann in his article “*Work, Leisure, and the Center of Life*” provides a dialogue on what incarnational theology should address relative to work and leisure. Hoffmann contends that incarnational theology must say bluntly, in the very first instance, that the Protestant ethic, for all its involvement in the work of the world, did not really reflect the essence of “the Word made flesh.”³⁶ Secondly, the Protestant ethic focused on work as if it were the only significant aspect of life. Next, because it had lost

³⁵ David Moberg, *Inasmuch: Christian Social Responsibility in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), 165.

³⁶ Victor F. Hoffmann, “Work, Leisure, and Center of Life,” *The Lutheran Quarterly*, 22, no. 3, (1970): 237.

its sense of incarnational direction, the Protestant ethic had degenerated into a worldly, materialistic view of life. Additionally, it had become culture-bound, imprisoned in and identified with the capitalistic way of doing things. Finally, the Protestant ethic, built on the rigid compulsiveness of ledger-ethics and the uncertainties of predestination, failed to alleviate the guilt feelings and anxieties of work-frustrated individuals. Above all, the Christian does not work or prove that he is a child of God, that he has been preordained or predestined to eternity. The Christian works and lives in a free and confident spirit because he is a child of God.”³⁷ If Christians approach work from the standpoint of the Incarnation, their notion of work will differ radically. Incarnational theology could never have made its peace with the Protestant ethic. Nor, can it make its peace with the spirit of capitalism. Moreover, if we put the Incarnation at the center of life, we will be forced to say something to the younger generation ideal-type in its pursuits for meaning, identity, and community.”³⁸

A Theological Perspective on the Ethics of Leisure

Our lives are composed of work and leisure. Leisure is the free-time that we experience either rhythmically or sporadically. Work is a significant part of our lives and is equally important. The attitudes of many cultures is “business before pleasure.” We are a nation of clock watchers, waiting for the appropriate moment to disengage from work and enter the re-creative state of leisure. Much that advances our humanity takes place in leisure time; the coming together of companions, a needed balance to our usual activities and professions, and the psychological space to be ourselves. Leisure is a hallowed time

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

of engagement with God, ourselves, family and loved ones. Post-modern society is characterized by greater amounts of leisure time, even though the concern is still prevalent that there may not actually be enough leisure time to be meaningful. Some would argue that leisure time is to be spent on that which is dull, mundane and trivial. The full and integrated person is one who directs and manages this block of unobligated time so that it becomes the locus for creativity, the developing of skills and insights.

The Second Vatican Council, in its *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (*Gaudium et Spes*), reminds us of the critical importance for workers (those who are employed) so they ultimately might “cultivate their family, cultural, social, and religious life” (GS 67). And the same document states: “May these leisure hours be properly used for relaxation of spirit and the strengthening of mental and bodily health.” (GS 61)”³⁹ Leisure is much like liturgy in that it takes place within a specific time, in a specific place, and requires a heightened level of spirituality in order to enjoy and appreciate the sacredness which lies at its foundation. “Rhythmic time is humankind’s way of responding to the endless repetition and cyclical meaninglessness of chronological time, which is mere duration.”⁴⁰ To experience the true benefits of leisure, the flow must be stopped. We must engage in the celebration of sacred time in creative ways in which true leisure can be manifested. In many ways we miss the fullness of our lives because we treat both sacred time and ordinary time in the same manner. Just as sacred time is celebrated differently by different traditions, so people recapture and rekindle their lives in a multitude of exciting ways. We can only bring harmony to our

³⁹ Michael Downey, “Leisure,” *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, (1993): 597.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

interior and exterior worlds through the constructive use of leisure. “Leisure like liturgy, can help discover the balance between presence to self and presence to others. In order to experience the sacredness of time, we must let time in. That is what leisure does.”⁴¹

The most basic of all moral issues is the quest for the good life. In *Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle related to the good life of pleasure, happiness, leisure, and virtue. Virtue (or excellence of the soul) in itself is the source of true pleasure, happiness, and leisure because it is the fulfillment of divine purpose. Leisure, as conceived by Aristotle, was quite different from the contemporary notion of leisure. The ancient Greek meaning for leisure was more than freedom from the necessity of being occupied. It entailed a state of being, characterized by intrinsic peace, freedom, joy, and contemplation. According to Aristotle, the true essence of leisure leads us to virtuous choices.

The idea of leisure as a virtue is somewhat alien to our contemporary meaning of leisure. A long-standing virtue which lies at the foundation of our society is work. The inferences of the work ethic are: Work is utilitarian; leisure is non-utilitarian. Work involves social concern; leisure is egotistic. Work is a virtue; leisure (by reason) is a vice. It is this dualistic paradigm of work and leisure that contributes to the overall demise of leisure.

A utilitarian ethic which embraces work has deprived us of a meaning of leisure as being an experience which is worthy of work itself. “Although leisure is occasionally viewed as being at odds with work, the most frequent defense of leisure is that it has a

⁴¹ Ibid.

functional purpose to work, that is, restoration, respite and reward.”⁴² The basic problem with a functional meaning of leisure is that leisure is subordinate to the meaning of work. A problem which faces leisure philosophers today is the ethical justification of both work and leisure in tandem. Both concepts are interdependent, one being necessary to the other and both being view as inherently good. Christian theology provides the basis for leisure being viewed as essential and good.

Traditionally, the protestant Church actively promoted the virtues of hard work, achievement, and success. On the other hand, the appreciation of leisure as a worthy end in itself has little regard. The integration of a leisure ethic and theology is not a contemporary concept. This concept has been discussed for decades, but needs to be revisited periodically. Josef Pieper argued that in society’s changing concept of the nature of humanity, it is absolutely essential that the understanding of leisure have its basis in theology from an existential perspective. In a comparable vein, Robert Lee declared in his text, *Religion and Leisure in America*, “The problem of leisure is, of course, the problem of life. Leisure finds its significance in the total context of a meaningful life. Leisure is a part of man’s ultimate concern. It is a crucial part of the very search for meaning of life ... Increasingly it is in our leisure time that either the meaningfulness or pointlessness of life will be revealed.”⁴³

Lee posits that the lack of ethical systems in the understanding of leisure is largely due to a silence on the part of religious institutions. Perhaps it is not so much that Christian leaders today teach against leisure; rather, the Church has basically ignored a

⁴² Margaret Trunfio. “A Theological Perspective on the Ethics of Leisure,” in *Leisure and Ethics: Reflections of the Philosophy of Leisure*, ed. Gerald E. Fain. (Reston: American Association for Leisure and Recreation, 1991), 151.

⁴³ Robert Lee, *Religion and Leisure in America* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1964), 25-26.

theological interpretation of leisure as a non-utilitarian virtue. Despite the integration of religion and the ethics of leisure, classical and contemporary leisure philosophers (Pieper, deGrazia, Neulinger) and theologians have rarely addressed the issue. For example, Trunfio (1991) conducted a study on perceptions related to Christian faith and leisure. Theologians at an evangelical seminary were interviewed on their thoughts related to theology and leisure. Several of the respondents concurred with Lee's proposition. Several of the theologians interviewed noted that they had not given much consideration to the ethics of leisure, and that there is little education on leisure in the Church.

The researcher had a specific interest in determining whether the theologians included in the sample perceived leisure from a "holistic" perspective, or from a "dualistic" perspective. The holistic perspective is aligned with the Aristotelian ideal of leisure as a state of being free. In contrast, the dualistic perspective suggests that leisure derives its meaning from standing in opposition to work, on the life continuum. The dualistic concept of leisure as non-work time or non-work activity is perhaps the predominate view of contemporary Americans. The critical findings of the study by Trunfio brought to bear multiple perceptions, definitions, and experiences of leisure. There was not evidence of strong differentiation of values between work and leisure, that is, work and leisure were not in total dichotomy. However, most of the respondents acknowledged that leisure for them had a greater utilitarian role, but not always in regard to their work. The functions of leisure which surfaced were: change of activity, family obligations, exercise, and reward. The members of this sample felt they placed an "acceptable" importance upon leisure. Many felt that it was necessary to schedule leisure

time and activities or the opportunity would escape them. Their responses revealed a more dualistic role to work.

Lastly, in Trunfio's research, her questions about the direct influence of faith on leisure brought forth a myriad of responses. In a variety of ways, each of the theologians stated that the purpose of life is to glorify God through all experiences. Several of them pointed to scriptural principles which influenced their perceptions related to leisure. The two most common principles were those of rest and stewardship. They expressed an obligation not to consume leisure for self-gratification, but also for altruistic purposes. In summary of this research effort, the subjects professed that faith is the integrating factor in their lives and that it is their "calling" which contributes to a sense of holism. For most of them, leisure was not experienced as an ideal state of being or as an end in itself. Primarily, the good of leisure lies in its utilitarian value.⁴⁴

Spiritual Benefits of Leisure

Josef Pieper in *Leisure: The Basis for Culture* proclaims that "leisure is a condition of the soul."⁴⁵ It is an attitude of mind and a condition of the soul which fosters a capacity to perceive the reality of the world we live in. The important role which leisure plays in the overall health and well-being of every individual cannot be diminished. As Christians, we have long known that the human person is composed of both a body and a soul. However, while each person has been formed from the unity of these two elements (body and soul), there are in fact four dimensions to each of us: (1) physical, (2) mental, (3) emotional and (4) spiritual. While each of these dimensions is distinct, they are

⁴⁴ Trunfio, 152-153.

⁴⁵ Pieper, 30.

interconnected and dependent upon one another due to the fact that each human being is a unified whole. Thus, if one or more of these dimensions within and individual has been neglected or impaired in any way, his or her overall health, well-being, and, quite naturally, happiness, will be adversely affected.

Human beings are complex creatures, and for us to live integrated, balanced and whole lives, we must continually work to develop and nourish each of these four dimensions within ourselves. In other words, the development of our full human potential as individuals does not simply happen on its own as a result of nature; we are duly obligated to ensure that this development continues throughout the course of our lives. The respect for and productive use of leisure in its varied form contributes powerfully to this goal. The time allocated to pursue or not pursue leisure has a rather substantial impact upon these four dimensions of our existence. The role of leisure in our physical domain is clear. The human body is not a machine. It is a highly complex organism which requires an adequate amount of both exercise and rest to continuously maintain and repair itself. The time that we invest in leisurely pursuits affords our bodies the opportunity to achieve these ends.

Leisure time is also an important element in maintaining sound mental health. The everyday concerns that bear upon each of us, coupled with any specific matters that may warrant our attention, can, at times, simply appear to be too much for us. Leisure activities prove to be a welcome break from our obsessing over such concerns by giving our minds the chance to focus on less demanding and stressful matters. More often than not, we return from such activities refreshed and ready to deal with our problems in a more objective and productive manner.

Leisure is mental and spiritual attitude, it is not solely a by-product of external factors or inevitable residue of excess time, not is a vacation of simply time away. It is without question an attitude of the mind and a condition of soul which countervails work. Leisure is non-activity; a state of restful silence which brings forth the receptivity of the soul. It is an attitude of mind which remains open to the possibilities of creative forces working around us and within us. Josef Pieper in his essay “Leisure as a Spiritual Attitude” reminds us that “compared with the elusive idea of work as toil, leisure appears in its character as an attitude of contemplative celebration, a word that, properly understood goes to the very heart of the meaning. Leisure is only possible to a person who is at one with self, but who is also at one with the world.”⁴⁶ Being at leisure spiritually is both an affirmation and confirmation.

Pieper artfully brings to bear the point that leisure is fundamentally estranged from work. A cessation from ones work, for the sake of refreshment or revitalization, serves a utilitarian purpose—preparing one to return to work. Leisure on the other hand is not on a parallel plane with work. Leisure does not exist for the sake of work. According to the thought of Pieper, “leisure is not to be restorative, a pick-me-up, whether mental or physical; and though it gives new strength, mentally, physically, and spirutally too, that is still not the point.”⁴⁷ Leisure is much higher state than the active life (*vita activa*). It is comparable to the essence of the contemplative state which we periodically find ourselves resting in. Anything less than this will leave the individual lacking. There will always be a shortfall when it comes to fully understanding the “pure fruits” of leisure and

⁴⁶ Pieper, “Leisure as a Spiritual Attitude,” 10.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 11.

its quickening, transcendent power. The power is in seeing the wholeness of life and the opportunities to celebrate life and its wonders on a higher spiritual plane.

In the final paragraph of the essay, Pieper makes a comment which summarizes the value of leisure in a spiritual sense. He states:

In leisure—not exclusively in leisure, but always in leisure—the truly human values are saved and preserved because leisure is the means whereby the sphere of the “specifically human” can, over and again, be left behind—not as a result of nay violent effort to escape, but as in an ecstasy (the ecstasy is indeed more difficult than the most violent exertion, more difficult because not invariably at our beck and call; a state of extreme tension is more easily induced than a state of relaxation and ease although the latter is effortless); the enjoyment of leisure is hedged in by paradoxes of this kind, and it is itself a state at once very human and superhuman.⁴⁸

Aristotle once said of leisure, “A man will live thus, not to the extent that he is a man, but to the extent that a divine principle dwells within him”⁴⁹ In light of the content of the aforementioned discourse provided by Pieper, the task at hand is for the individual and society as a whole to develop a personal and corporate, theologically-based leisure ethic.

Rev. Paul D. Griffin in an article entitled “*Leisure Renews Body and Soul*” reminds us that as human beings, we are created to be in communion with God and one another. Griffin proceeds to state:

⁴⁸ Ibid., 12.

⁴⁹ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 10, 7 (1177b).

So, to be fully human requires us to be able to live and communicate well with our fellow man, and this cannot be achieved unless our emotional lives are properly developed and balanced. Leisure activities provide an excellent opportunity for us to come into contact with others and develop our inter-personal skills while establishing and maintaining the bonds of love and friendship which are so important to our emotional well-being and stability. Lastly, on the spiritual plane, leisure activities invite us to recall the beauty and goodness of God, which is reflected in all of His creation.⁵⁰

Gordon J. Dahl in "*Time, Work and Leisure*" further elaborates upon the mandate to address leisure as a spiritual concept. Dahl suggests that if the Church generally, and clergy specifically are going to speak about leisure then it must be done in spiritual terms. Leisure he urges is a spiritual concept. He further expounds upon the fact that leisure in the spiritual dimension allows us the opportunity to reflect backwards in a spirit of thanksgiving and permits us to look forward with anticipation of the newness of life into eternity. Dahl also raises a caution relative to presenting any spiritual, or radically Christian, understanding of leisure in contemporary society. He asserts, "the prevailing forms of Christianity are so deeply committed to providing contemporary man with religious ratification for "virtuous materialism" that they can scarcely find a position from which to venture critique."⁵¹

Toward Guiding the Ecclesial Interpretation of Work and Leisure

David W. Haddorff in his article "*Theology and the Market Ethos*," provides direction for resolving the interpretive problems of the church when it comes to the

⁵⁰ Paul D. Griffin, "Leisure Renews the Body and Soul," *Spirituality for Today*, 3, no.1 (1997), [journal on-line]; available from <http://www.spirituality.org/issue25/pg06.html>; Internet; accessed 28 September 2004, 1-2.

⁵¹ Gordon J. Dahl, "Time, Work and Leisure," *The Christian Century*, 87, no.1 (1971), 188.

theological concepts of work and leisure. Haddorff asserts, “the church, at its best, is responsible for re-socializing its members into practices that undermine the pervasive control of the alien market ethos and *redefine* the nature of work and leisure. This *practical* (constructive) *task* asks three critical questions: (1) What are the ecclesial practices that redefine the nature of work and leisure? (2) Do these practices need to be reinterpreted, reformed, or reapplied to particular cultural situations? (3) Do these practices extend beyond the church to external alien structures and organizations?”⁵²

Before the first question can be addressed, it is imperative to define what is meant by the term “practices.” A definition of social practices and their application to church related practices must be broad and flexible enough to include numerous forms of individual and communal activity, yet narrow enough to focus primarily on the ritual practices of ecclesial communities. To meet the aforementioned criteria, the following definition is provided:

In short, practices are those actions that belong to a way of life as means to appropriate ends (eating, resting); are worthy ends in their own right (breaking bread together, the communion of hospitality); and are the mediums whereby our lives are centered, ordered and sustained. The forms of practices are many, from highly ritualized ceremonies to the informality of half-noticed routines (a handshake, a greeting). The faith community’s sacraments, as rich, carefully ritualized reenactments, are on one end of this spectrum. Yet sacraments are practices supreme only if and when they embody and show forth their connectedness to the rest of life, only if and when they show the way.⁵³

⁵² David W. Haddorff, “Theology and the Market Ethos: Toward an Ecclesial Understanding of Work and Leisure,” *Union Seminary Quarterly*, 50, no. 1, (1996):91.

⁵³ Larry Rasmussen, *Moral Fragments and Moral Community: A Proposal for Church and Society*, (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 156.

Christianity, as a socially embodied tradition, maintains its own communal integrity through its own particular socially embodied practices. What, then, are the tradition constituted practices of an inclusive Christian community and their practical import for work and leisure? Regardless of ecclesiastical differences among contemporary Christian churches, a pertinent place to begin is with the practices of the early church. Not unlike us in our own henotheistic culture, the early Christians lived in continuous tension between their way of life and the alien practices of the prevailing culture. Wayne Meeks' ethnographical approach to the study of early Christian morality creatively uses such an inclusive understanding of practices to describe the process of re-socialization among Christians during the first three centuries of the common era.⁵⁴ Meeks observes, "Like a natural language, these practices 'make sense' within a particular social setting."⁵⁵

As "resident aliens" in the market culture, therefore, Christians must evaluate secular notions of work and leisure in light of both the recollection and the moral instruction associated with these ecclesial practices. This twofold pattern embodies the communal memory (anamnesis) and the outward ethical response to moral instruction and active engagement of one's polyphonic community and greater society (*parenesis*).⁵⁶ Meeks further states:

⁵⁴ Wayne Meeks, *The Origins of Christian Morality: The First Two Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 108.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁵⁶ Wayne Meeks, "The Polyphonic Ethics of the Apostle Paul," in *The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics*, 1988 (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1988), 17-29.

The practice of baptism, for instance, connects the *anamnesis* of Jesus' death and resurrection with the *parenesis* of personal *metanoia* (conversion), communal friendship, and personal responsibility expected from someone who walks in newness of life and the eucharist intertwines the *anamnesis* of the Last Supper with the *parenesis* of appropriate relations within the ecclesial household and outsiders. The re-socialization of Christians includes not only the adoption of distinct values, principles, or virtues present in the *parenesis* of ecclesial practices, but also the recollection and recitation of the foundational narrative embodied in the *anamnesis* of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ.⁵⁷

Since activity of worship is enjoined to our other daily activities, it embodies the practices of remembrance, instruction, and action (*anamnesis* and *parenesis*) that set the context for other daily activities. Miroslav Volf correctly insists that if pneumatological fits include both liturgical and daily activities, then communion with God cannot be reduced to *vita action* or *vita contemplativa*; work and rest are interdependent activities. "Work is not the only purpose of rest," he states: "Rest is intrinsically valuable even though one of its functions is to enrich and ennoble work. And, rest is not the only purpose of work: Work is intrinsically meaningful even though it also makes rest possible."⁵⁸ In the last analysis, just as worship provides the content for the practice of "good leisure," so, too, the ecclesial practices present in worship form the structure for the practice of "good work." In this way, since work and leisure are not simply polar but interdependent activities, it is also evident that "good work" is present in worship,

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Miroslav Volf, "Work of the Gifts of the Spirit," in *Christianity and Economics in the Post-Cold War Era: The Oxford Declaration and Beyond*, ed. Herbert Schlossberg, Vinay Samuel, and Ronald J. Sider (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 45.

particularly in the activity of the liturgy, which is literally the embodiment of the “work of the people.”⁵⁹

Haddorff suggests that these ecclesial practices provide the language for organizational visions that foster cooperative sharing of knowledge and decision making, flexible specialization and self-development, and reaffirmation of the intrinsic value of both work and leisure. Yet the question still remains: What kinds of specific organizational reforms emerge from an ecclesial understanding of work and leisure? There are, at least, five strategies that emerge from this discussion. First, just as the *anamnesis* of the Sabbath determines the meaning and significance of human work, so, too, the practice of “good leisure” defines the practice of “good work.” Not only must the ethos of the workplace affirm the interdependence of work and leisure, but leisure is the *telos* of work. This leads to two practical reforms: (1) it insists on the structural task of increasing leisure time (simply encouraging employees to work harder without more leisure time causes individuals to denigrate both work and leisure by undervaluing both activities); (2) it insists on promoting active (not hyperactive or inactive) practices of ‘good leisure’ that foster self-development and reconnect individuals to God, their communities, and the environment. This task involves not only informing and transforming personal attitudes about work and the common good, but also the creation of humane structures that will foster not egoism but community.”⁶⁰

Of the five strategies suggested by Haddorff, perhaps the fifth strategy is the most important. This strategy concentrates on a specific series of practical steps organizations

⁵⁹ Haddorff, 95.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 98.

must accomplish in order to implement the previous four strategies. This task of organizational reform proclaims a threefold policy: (1) it encourages workers to develop their own personal vision of work based on their religious or philosophical values; (2) it encourages organizations to take this information and shape a salient moral vision of work and leisure; and (3) it encourages these organizations to dialogue with other concerned parties in shaping a new non-market social definition of work and leisure.⁶¹

By drawing upon religious values and language, a communal vision of work and leisure that challenges the market ethos can be developed. Additionally, these institutions can implement public discourse with other relevant institutions such as the family and church, with the penultimate goal being the reformulation of our social market understanding of the concepts of work and leisure. The church's mission is not to transform the workplace, but to create a people that can learn to practice work and leisure theologically.

The Role of the Church In Espousing the Theology of Leisure/Leisure Ethic

The church has been in the primary proponent of worship for a long time, but it generally has not embraced the concept of leisure as a legitimate arena for expressing our faith. Consequently, we have been guilty of fragmenting the wholeness of life by withholding the joy, fulfillment and freedom Christ can bring through play and this concept of leisure. The church needs to call attention to, and develop a spiritual reverence for, the natural environment. The church needs not only to accept but also to encourage alternative modes of living, which provide options to the materialistic work-involvement spiral and a balanced relationship and rhythm between work, leisure, and worship. The church needs to recognize itself to be in mission, to be the salt of the earth, to be the light

⁶¹ Ibid., 99.

of the world, and to stop worshipping our work and playing at our worship, and to recognize that God is over all of life. As a part of her evangelistic mission (Mt 28:19-20) the church must teach the world to worship, work and to pursue leisure. Traditionally, the church has slept through critical transitional points in modern history. The onset of the “age of leisure” is one of those. “We dare not sleep through this revolution, because our values and concepts of wholeness are directly affected. Leisure is the business of the church. It must be one of the major items on our agenda. We must be courageous enough to be involved boldly and creatively.”⁶²

From the vantage point of pastoral care, it is essential that clergy instruct parishioners on the virtues of work, play, and leisure. Even though, stereotypically speaking, it may be difficult for pastors to be intentional about leisure, it is necessary for the achievement of balance and good stewardship in life. Most parishioners have no theology of leisure at all, and those that do, their theology of leisure is not positive. Ruth Barnhouse in “*The Theology of Pastoral Care: A Progress Report*” suggests that a possible remedy lies in a “re-theologizing” of pastoral care. What is proposed is a practical theology which moves others to action. Worship is an integral part of the life of a congregation and should be transcendent.⁶³ Depending on the definition of leisure that is used, the worship experience, a spiritual experience done within the context of a higher plane of leisure, can be transcendent. The task again, is to educate parishioners about the spiritual dimensions of leisure.

⁶² Kathy A. Gingrich, “A Theology of Leisure, Brethren Life and Thought,” Vol. XXIV, No. 1, (Oak Brook, IL: *Brethren Journal Association*, 1979), 50-54.

⁶³ Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse, “The Theology of Pastoral Care: A Progress Report,” *Anglican Theological Review* (Evanston: Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, 1983), 405-408.

Howard Walker in his article “*Is Leisure the Church’s Business?*” addresses the question of the church’s role in teaching the biblical basis of both work and leisure. He asks the question, “Who has any greater responsibility than the church to help this happen?” Walker proposed that the church must actively persuade people through preaching and teaching that God intended his people to engage in periods of rest and holy leisure. Most churches need to do some careful planning and educating if this kind of leisure is to happen.⁶⁴ Sermons can challenge us to affirm the values of leisure as we have already experienced the values of work. If, in fact, a paradigm shift is to occur, then perhaps the bearer of the burden should be the church. The church must assume the responsibility for teaching the balanced biblical virtues of both work and leisure. A thorough understanding of the concepts of the Sabbath, time, and rest must be embedded in the sacred teachings. As we devote time to discussions relative to the establishment of a sound work ethic as a part of Christian duty, at the same time we must also lay the foundation for the development of both an individual and corporate leisure ethic.

Of similar import is an article written by Gabriel Moran, which addresses the issue of educating for leisure through Christian education initiatives. Moran contends that the church is responsible for educating its members on issues related to Sabbath, work, and leisure. He proposes that in-depth teachings be conducted on the virtues, benefits and negative aspects of each of the aforementioned subjects. Moran argues that the church can be demonstration of the union of work and leisure. Through appropriate education

⁶⁴ Howard E. Walker, “Is Leisure the Church’s Business?,” *Spectrum*, 51, no.1 (1975): 22-23.

parishioners can become actively familiar with silence, contemplation, and celebration through worship, all within the context of leisure.⁶⁵

Moran in *Interplay: A Theory of Religion and Education* concludes that the church must be the vehicle to address the issue of creating a balance between work and leisure. The word “leisure” itself challenges our assumptions about work. The term forces the rediscovery and re-evaluation of the meaning of free time by the church. If our conceptions about work are changing, then our opinions relative to leisure, through the lens of the church, must also evolve. The church can be a catalyst in moving Christians into the domain of enlightenment relating to these two important concepts. Churches can exercise tremendous influence here. Leisure as a contemplative endeavor is foreign to our culture, but that does not wholeheartedly denote that people will not respond to the possibility of experiencing it at a very personal level. The tantamount issue is whether religious educators see leisure and its contemplative element, as a valuable and practical concern of religious education.⁶⁶

Historically, the church has placed heavy emphasis on work and very little on the merits of leisure. Moran proposes that there are distinct differences between job and work; and leisure as free and free time and leisure as contemplation. Both distinctions are grounded in religious history. He proposes that “job and free time are part of the ordinary fare of life; work and contemplation are a call to something better than our usual routines.”⁶⁷ In *Religious Education Development*, Moran charges the church with the

⁶⁵ Gabriel Moran, “Work, Leisure, and Christian Education,” *Religious Education*, 74, no. 2 (1979): 165-170.

⁶⁶ Gabriel Moran, *Interplay: A Theory of Religion and Education* (Winona: Saint Mary’s Press, Christian Brothers Publications, 1981), 86.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 80.

responsibility of educating retiring congregants on how to retire from jobs, but not from work, as a part of Christian education initiatives. The wise use of leisure can be of benefit to all. Moran proposes that leisure is an aim of both secular and non-secular education. He notes that the goal is not to disparage work, but to determine whether leisure is an indicator of concern with occupation or with forms of work that educate.⁶⁸

Leland Ryken charges that the church has a stake in leisure. In addition to providing opportunities for leisure, the church must also provide badly needed direction from the pulpit. Many sitting in the pews would be astonished to learn that we are also to be wise stewards over our leisure. “If the Bible prescribes a balance between work and rest, the church schedule should reflect a similar balance between service and leisure.”⁶⁹ At a variety of levels- personal, family, ecclesiastical- the goal is a Christian life style. The Church in the twenty-first century has not yet given its best thought and effort to a balanced theology of work and leisure, a biblically grounded theology of leisure and advocacy for a leisure ethic. The time has arrived to do so. “Perhaps a redemptive and novel ministry for the church in the new millennium will be to reach persons in their free-choosing time with experiences which lead to wholeness, mending the wounds of humanity through the multi-dimensional utilization of leisure.”⁷⁰

An ethic of leisure must also be delicately positioned alongside our work ethic. Leisure as rest from work can become a vital construct in our theological beliefs and perceptions about the purposes of work. Work and leisure must be engineered into a

⁶⁸ Gabriel Moran, *Religious Education Development* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1983), 172-173.

⁶⁹ Ryken, “Teach Us to Play, Lord,” 22.

⁷⁰ Wallace Chappell, “Theology and Leisure,” *Spectrum*, 48, no. 1, (1972), 7.

tandem of meaningful life experiences for humanity. Our theologies of play and leisure must be firmly grounded in hope, liberation, a broad eschatological view in which we will one day experience an eternal, “divine state of leisure.” A theological-based leisure ethic will benefit all of humankind by empowering us to accept the blessing of leisure, which God has given us and use it for a higher spiritual benefit.

Summary

As noted in the beginning of this section, the development of a theology of work and leisure begins with the biblical account of creation. Upon completion of the work of creation, “God rested and was refreshed” (Ex 31:17, NRSV). In the Fourth Commandment of the Decalogue (Ex 20:9-10) speaks directly to observing the Sabbath. Here is where God proclaimed an ordered balance between work and rest. An ethic of both work and leisure is required for humanity to achieve the prescribed balance.

The essays in this section penned by Kathy Gingrich, Francis Schussler Fiorenza, and Miroslav Volf address the theological issues which lie at the heart of both work and leisure. The quest for balance between the two requires a “vision” which is grounded in a working understanding of the scripture and is guided by the Holy Spirit. Each author affirms the critical point that work is not the ultimate end to life, nor is leisure. The two concepts are not mutually exclusive from one another but are complimentary concepts. Both concepts are important in the life of the Believer. David W. Haddorff and Robert Wuthnow point to the fact that correct interpretations of the concepts of work and leisure and their meanings are important to the development of both a theology of leisure and a theologically sound leisure ethic.

Gordon Dahl, Gwen L. Wright and John Oswalt in their respective essays, are in accord when noting that there must be a shift away from the often negative, antiquated ways of thinking about leisure in the life of Christians, to a more spiritually centered focus on leisure. Each of the authors suggests that within the context of leisure lies a creative power which can help Christians live fuller lives in Christ. A critical part of living a “fuller” life in Christ, is living “guilt-free” about leisure. William Stevenson, Leland Ryken and Victor F. Hoffman affirm this position in their respective works.

Toward the end of developing a leisure ethic, the importance of the incarnational theology and again, the spiritual dimension of leisure cannot be ignored. The articles written by Victor F. Hoffman, Margaret Trunfio, Josef Pieper, Rev. Mark Connolly reinforce that fact that leisure has an important spiritual element which can aid the individual in drawing closer to God as well as improving mental, physical and spiritual well-being.

Howard Walker, Gabriel Moran and Leland Ryken charge that the church has a direct responsibility for developing a balanced work and leisure ethic. Both concur that the primary mode for accomplishing this task is through preaching and Christian education initiatives. As this leisure ethic is espoused, doctrine and dogma must align with praxis. Christians must be convinced that within the bounds of “holy leisure,” meaningful worship and communion with God, through the Holy Spirit, can be found. Overall, each of the authors presented make salient points that lead toward the development of a theologically sound, Christ-centered ethic of leisure. With the church at the forefront of this endeavor, a model of a theologically based leisure ethic is needed.

Toward the end of liberating congregants from the shackles of church tradition and bad church doctrine the development of a theological and ethic of work and leisure is imperative. The actions of the church as the change agent must be centered around espousing Bible truths related to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. Liberation proceeds from truth. Both orthodoxy and orthopraxy are by-products of correct teaching and examples of how to live life in a fun-filled, abundant manner. The researcher concludes this chapter and now transitions to the final chapter of this document, Chapter Seven: Summary, Conclusions, and Reflections related to work, Sabbath, time, leisure, and leisure counseling.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND REFLECTIONS RELATED TO THE STUDY OF WORK, SABBATH, TIME, AND LEISURE WITHIN THE CONTEXT

Having discussed the genesis of the project from the introduction to the development of theologically based work and leisure ethic, this chapter summarizes the document. Each chapter will be briefly reviewed. Additionally, the researcher will present his conclusions. The conclusions correlate to hypothesis testing and observations extracted from the leisure counseling group.

As a part of the completion of this research endeavor, the researcher presents his reflections, provides a series of recommendations, discusses the implications for future implementation of the model and culminates with closing comments.

Summary

Every chapter served as a building block to the final chapter. The six chapters developed before this one represent a synthesis of effort. In Chapter One, the researcher provided a discussion about his spiritual journey, ancestry, experiences with work, Sabbath, leisure, time constraints, and counseling. He examined the context from a theological, ecological, and resource perspective. The researcher identified five crucial intersections—the problem of individual and corporate busyness, concerns over Sabbath,

time constraints, the role of church tradition and doctrine in influencing leisure choices and behavior, and operationalizing the idea of abundant living.

In Chapter Two the researcher present a representative body of literature all directly related to the topics of work, Sabbath, time, time, leisure, and pastoral care and counseling. In the area of pastoral care and counseling Gawain, Clinebell, Kornfeld provides useful information about the importance of self-care and caring for congregations. Purves, Partee, and Naegeli provide literature which underscored the importance of pastoral theology as foundational to counseling and caregiving. deGraff, Keyes, Helldorfer, Sherrow and Watkins-Ali all provided interesting perspectives about work and its meaning within broader society. Thurston, Robinson and Godbey, Linder, and Schor provided useful insights into the problem of time and it impacts upon society. Several authors contributed to the synthesis of ideas relative to Sabbath. Heschel, Muller, Bass, Edwards, and Kushner provided constructive commentary on the topic of Sabbath.

In the area of leisure, deLisle, Messenger, Russell, Richard, and Ernce addressed the role of the church in the provision of leisure services and as the shaper of ideas relative to leisure behavior and consumption. Literature written by Ryken and Doohan provided the backdrop for the discussion of doctrinal and tradition-based constraints to leisure. Finally, Loesch and Wheeler provided definitions and models related to leisure counseling.

In Chapter Three, the research defined the essential terms related to the project. The biblical, theological and historical warrants were also discussed in this chapter. Work, Sabbath, time, leisure, leisure counseling and pastoral care and counseling were defined as essential terms. Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:8-11; Ecclesiastes 3:1-11; 18; Ezekiel

34:11-12; Matthew 9:35-38; 10:1; Mark 6:30-33; and Ephesians 5:16 were discussed as biblical warrants. God, Jesus, sin, redemption, compassion, and abundant life were discussed in the theological warrants section of the chapter. Additionally, liberation theology and Paul Tillich's Correlation Method were discussed in this section. A thorough discussion of the historical developments relative to work, Sabbath, time, leisure, and pastoral care was provided.

The researcher elaborated upon the research design and methodology in Chapter Four. The rationale, research questions, limitations and delimitations, hypotheses, instrumentation, sampling methodology, theoretical models, counseling models, and plans for data analysis are included in this chapter.

The fifth chapter provides a narrative of the field experience and discussion of data analysis. The data is presented in two major sections, Phase I which included the congregational survey, and Phase II which presents qualitative data obtained from the field experience with the leisure counseling group.

The first section, which is related to the congregational survey, presents demographic information, a presentation of quantitative data in tabular form, and a summary of hypothesis testing. The second section related to the leisure counseling group, provides a summary of hypothesis testing, followed by the presentation of qualitative data in narrative and tabular forms. A discussion of efforts to validate results is provided, followed by a closing summary.

Based on the literature, observation within the context and the results of data analysis, the researcher opted to add a sixth chapter which addresses the need for a theologically based work and leisure ethic. This section highlights the work of key

authors such as Pieper, Moran, Ryken, Barnhouse and others that advocated for the development of a theologically grounded work and leisure ethic. The chapter also highlights the role of the church in educating congregants for leisure.

In summary each chapter was developed to serve as a “building block” for the summary, conclusions, and reflections related to the study.

Conclusions

In light of the summary presented in the preceding paragraphs, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. There are biblical, theological, and historical warrants for churches to be concerned with work, Sabbath, time, leisure, and pastoral care and counseling. Convincing exegesis and hermeneutics were followed by theological analysis and historical compilations featured in Chapter Three. Convincing arguments presented by writers such as Bass, Pieper, Ryken, Heschel, Muller, and Lee validate the fact that God is concerned about the overall well being of humanity. This overall well being includes the manner in which we utilize and act as stewards of the gifts of work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. The Biblical and theological evidence also imitate that we are not to be oppressed by false teachings and bad doctrine that are used to constrain the lives of the people of God. The antidote for oppression is the liberating power of the gospel and the example of Jesus Christ, in the glory of his deity and humanity.
2. Conducting a congregational survey is a valid way to ascertain perceptions about work, Sabbath, time, and leisure in a systematic, meaningful way. Much can be gained to assist teaching and ministry development from the data. Additionally,

leisure counseling groups can be useful in helping people find and maintain the delicate balance between work, Sabbath-keeping, effective management of time, and the pursuit of leisure.

3. The qualitative data extracted from the leisure counseling group confirms much of what the quantitative data collected in Phase I of the study revealed. The data suggests that the congregation was uncertain about application of the Sabbath commandment to their daily living, a strong work ethic, is still reluctant about the role of leisure in their lives, and in general are constrained relative to leisure choice and behaviors by their own beliefs. Both the quantitative and qualitative data infer that personal beliefs rather than scripture and church teachings are the major determinant of leisure choices.
4. The data suggests that age group and length of membership within the congregation are powerful variables when considering beliefs related to work and leisure.
5. The study, inclusive of both phases, is replicable in other churches and the results of the data are generalizable to comparable congregations.
6. The researcher was both theologically and spiritually indicted and transformed by this research project. On a personal level, the researcher has committed fully to maintaining a Sabbath lifestyle and is looking at alternative ways to practice ministry and his secular vocation, toward the end of improved stewardship of his life.

In summary, this area of ministry is warranted by biblical, theological, and historical premises. The model of ministry is a valid one as confirmed by the literature review and results of data collection in both phases of the project.

Reflections

Having addressed the conclusions related to the study, the researcher now provides a series of reflections on the research endeavor. Note the following reflections:

1. Based on the field experience the researcher would advocate for a longer period of counseling with the leisure counseling group. Two contacts and a series of validation conversations were not sufficient to generate the type of change needed to facilitate abundant living. More time and sessions are needed to make a measurable impact.
2. Congregants are still wrestling with the biblical concepts of work, Sabbath, and leisure. The researcher believe that there is a cursory understanding of the value of each, but perhaps a series of pastoral teachings on each of he topics may have led to a greater level of understanding about these important biblical concepts.
3. Based on efforts by the pastor and leadership team, the congregation is more open to the ideas behind Christian leisure. Fun, fellowship, and leisure are not aberrations, but are essential elements to kingdom building. Since the implementation of this study, a new Fellowship Ministry has been developed, with leisure activities as its core.
4. There is a great need for the development of a counseling ministry to assist those who are on the cusp of retirement. The data collected in this study, along with the anecdotal evidence under gird the need to help busy people transition into a life of leisure.

In summary, the researcher encourages others to consider the conclusions and reflections rendered as a part of his study.

General Observations and Potential Remedies

After summarizing the study, providing conclusions and reflections, the researcher is providing some additional observations and possible remedies related to the subject matter. These thoughts are applicable to the current context and to society on the whole.

Work

Within the study population and the leisure counseling group work was a major issue. Both the work ethic and theological basis for work were very strong within the context. Evidence of the aforementioned statement can be found upon examination of the relatively high composite mean scores on the Protestant Work Ethic Scale (WES) and Theological Beliefs About Work Scale (TBAWS). Additionally, more than sixty percent of the sample reporting they worked between 41-65 hours per week. Lastly, in the leisure counseling group, the qualitative evidence suggests that there are strong biblical ties to work, and the preoccupation with work forces time management and leisure consumption challenges.

Despite what the sociological and technological evidence suggests, the fact remains that people generally are working more. Technology may have changed the manner in which work is orchestrated, but the time devoted to work has not declined. Al Gini in his book *The Importance of Being Lazy* argues that by 2014 the average worker in America will be putting in more than 3,000 hours annually.¹ He further states, “some scholars in American culture claim that we are a nation ‘predisposed to hard work,’ that

¹ Al Gini, *The Importance of Being Lazy* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 15-16.

the ‘elevation’ of work over leisure is an ethos that has long permeated our lives, and that we have made a religion out of our commitment to work.”² Arguably, Gini’s point may have merit when the trends related to work are noted.

Perhaps theologian and author Miroslav Volf has an appropriate response to the problem with controlling work within modern society and the work habits of Christians. Volf argues that the entirety of our lives must be governed by the Holy Spirit. His counsel is advocates that our lives at leisure and in work be guided by the unction of the Holy Spirit. Volf states the following regarding work:

It would be inadequate, however, to conceive of communion with God’s Spirit in worship merely as a background experience that influence work from the outside, so to speak. For worship only deepens the continuous presence of the Spirit in the life of a Christian. To live life means for Christ to live his life in a person through the Spirit (see Gal. 2:20; 5:2ff). A Christian does not work out of an experience of the Spirit that belongs to the past (a past Sunday experience). They work through the power of the Spirit that is now active in them. The presence of God’s Spirit permeates their work experience. They work in the Spirit.³

Withstanding the cultural and sociological backdrop to work among African Americans and the religious-spiritual value placed on employment and work, caution must be exercised not to create an idol. God intends for most people to work, but not to the point of excess and abuse. Volf’s point relative to the Spirit being the controlling agent in our work lives is meritorious.

² Ibid. 17-18.

³ Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 140-141.

Sabbath

The researcher fervently believes that Andrew Sung Park was correct in his assessment of Sabbath as joy. As evidenced by the Sabbath Beliefs and Practices scores generated by the general study population and in the qualitative responses to questions on the Sabbath answered by the leisure counseling group, on the whole we are missing the inherent value of Sabbath, joy. Park in his book *From Hurt to Healing: A Theology of the Wounded*, provides valuable commentary on the joy found in Sabbath when he states the following:

The universe is a manifestation of God's joy. God completed the creation of the universe in seven days. The Sabbath symbolizes God's joy of creation. God worked for the creation of the universes for six days and on the seventh day rested. Without the seventh day, God's creation never completes. The Sabbath day, the day of rest, crowns God's creation (Gen 2:1-4) ... Every evening was a little Sabbath for God.⁴

Park further proceeds to elucidate on the problem of busyness as a deterrent to Sabbath and finding the wonder of Sabbath joy when he states:

We are too busy with our lives to stop to appreciate God and God's joy in creating us. We rush all the time. "Time is too precious to waste by rushing it." We need to learn to rest in God's joyful plan for us... The Sabbath arises with the understanding that that we honor the aim of God's creation by partaking of God's joy through love ... Sabbath transpires whenever we find true rest in the Spirit of joy. After Sabbath we do not face "Monday" in the creation story. True rest knows no Monday and no anxiety about being and doing.⁵

What is pivotal in our liberation from the bondage of work, time, bad doctrine and personal constraints to guilt-free leisure is simply to learn to embrace the Sabbath. This is

⁴ Park, 149.

⁵ Ibid.

God's gift to us. Sabbath represents our license to rest and reflect, but it also represents a divinely sanctioned "play period" of laughter and frolic.

Wayne Muller in his book, *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives* addresses the critical problem of "legalism" relative to Sabbath. Muller makes the following statement regarding legalism:

On the seventh day, God rests, Jewish texts prohibit thirty-nine specific acts during Sabbath—acts traditionally associated with the rebuilding of the temple. If God could rest in creating the universe, God's people could rest in the building of the sacred temple ... But beyond the legalism is an idea that by saying no to making some things happen, deep permission arises for other things to happen. When we cease our daily labor, other things—love, friendship, prayer, touch, singing, rest—can be born in this peace created by our rest. Walking with a friend, reciting a prayer, caring for children, sharing bread and wine with family and neighbors—those are intimate graces that need precious time and attentions.

Over time, as with all ecclesial precepts, Sabbath laws became overly restrictive. The Jewish Sabbath could be so restrictive and morose that, for some, it became a day of lethargy and depression rather than sensuality and delight.

If we forget to rest we will work too hard and forget our more tender mercies, forget those we love, forget our children and our natural wonder. God says: Please don't. It is a waste of a tremendous gift I have given you. If you knew the value of your life, you would not waste a single breath. So I give you this commandment: Remember to rest. This is not a lifestyle suggestion, but a commandment—as important as not stealing, not murdering, or not lying. Remember to play hard and bless and make love and eat with those you love, and take comfort, easy and long, in this gift of sacred rest.⁶

In the final analysis what is important is that there is an effort to obey the Sabbath Commandment regardless of the form observance of the Sabbath period takes. Withstanding the evolution of work and its dynamic nature in the 21st century flexibility in terms of Sabbath observance is imperative. As noted in the data collected with the

⁶ Muller, 29-32.

sample population, the vast majority work full-time jobs and Sabbath observance is a peculiar matter. The cogent reality is that many are aware of the Fourth Commandment but remain confused about how to operationalize it in their daily living. When the Sabbath is not observed problems with overwork, time management, and a lack of leisure are eminent.

Time

Time proved to be a major constraint within the general study population and the sub-sample that comprised the leisure counseling group. Despite the relatively high composite score (26.90) on the Beliefs About Time Scale (BATS), the time crunch was validated in other ways. In the counseling group one of the major themes extracted from qualitative data was the need to better control and manage time. Respondents indicated that work, Sabbath practices, and opportunities to engage in leisure activities were negatively impacted by the lack of time. What will remain crucial in congregational time is the need to understand the limitation of chronological time and the manner in which poor stewardship negatively impacts worship, service, family relationships and most importantly personal well-being.

John deGraff in his book *Take Back Your Time* reminds humanity that we are in a critical position relative to time. As Americans we are overworked, lack the opportunity for vacations, and the dearth in time impacts society on the whole in a multitude of ways.⁷ deGraff suggests that the religious community can play a major role in combating the problem of lack of time. deGraff recommends the following actions:

⁷ deGraff, 1-4.

1. Reawaken in their own members the wisdom of restfulness, willingness to open more of their own time for Being and Loving, and the richness of prayer, meditation, chant, and ceremony that can make this real; and
2. Take action in the world of public policy to free more time for spiritual search, for family, and for community; and to create a real full-employment society in which “jobs” carry with them decent income, access to health care, dignity and self-direction—jobs secure enough and decent enough to let workers loose their grip on fear and seek free time.⁸

Author Ralph Keyes in *Timeclock: How Life Got So Hectic and What You Can*

Do About It suggests that the solution to the pervasive time crunch is to seek balance.

Keyes proposes:

The one thing that is craved above all else by the “timelocked” is balance. Not too fast, not too slow. Time enough for family, time enough to work, Neither time on one’s hands nor not enough time. Like gold to a prospector, land to a castaway, or salvation to a sinner, such balance is what the timelocked yearn for, yet despair of ever finding.

Keyes further posits that, “one of the underlying causes of imbalanced schedules is difficulty cutting back. As time passes we tend to keep adding new tasks without first pruning old ones. A prerequisite to achieving better balance is giving up the fantasy of being able to have it all.”⁹ The tangible reality is that we cannot create greater volumes of time, but can be wise stewards of the time that is given to use. Keyes is absolutely correct in prosing that the key to a balanced life is prioritization of tasks and reduction in

⁸ Ibid., 130.

⁹ Keyes, 200.

the number of commitments which are not essential to God, family, service, and our overall well-being.

Leisure

The data collected in this research endeavor allows the researcher to conclude that leisure within the context is misunderstood and less valued when compared to work. It is somewhat tragic that based on the statistical evidence, the conclusion can be drawn that the constraints on leisure are only marginally a function of doctrine and church teaching, but the congregants in the context are literally handcuffed by their personal beliefs about leisure. There is much work to be done within the context, the Church, and within society to heighten the value of leisure. It is even sadder to know that Jesus understood the value of leisure in kingdom building as evidenced by Mark 6:30-32. Without leisure and its accompanying forms of rest, kingdom building falters.

Carl Honore' is his book *In Praise of Slowness: How a Worldwide Movement is Challenging the Cult of Speed*, addresses the importance of leisure and lifestyles that embrace leisure. Honore' speaking on the importance of leisure as a vehicle to rest states:

In a world obsessed with work, leisure is a serious matter. The United Nations declared it a basic human right in 1948. Half a century of later, we are inundated with books, websites, magazines TV shows and newspaper supplements dedicated to hobbies and having fun. Leisure Studies is even an academic discipline. How to make the best use of free time is a new concern ... even as leisure spread, people debated its purpose... Seven decades later, though, the leisure revolution remains the stuff of fantasy. Work still rules our lives, and when we do have free time, we seldom use it to moon around in a Platonic reverie of stillness and reactivity. Instead, like earnest disciples of Frederick Taylor, we rush to fill up every spare moment with activity. An empty slot in the diary is more often a source of panic than please.¹⁰

If we are going to fulfill the promise of the liberating power of Christ, toward living the abundant life (Jn 10:10) then we must recapture leisure.

Donna Schaper further emphasizes the need for the people of God to take advantage of the gift of leisure in her book *Sabbath Sense: A Spiritual Antidote for the Overworked*. Schaper proposes than in tandem with Sabbath observance there is a tremendous need for the development of a new “play ethic.” A play ethic understood by mass society, which embraces and praises idleness, provides an antidote to the virus of overwork. Schaper states:

A true play ethic recreates nearly lost or forgotten parts of life, the porch swinging and playing cards, deep repose, Sabbath dinners, and just plain loafing. Many people are uncomfortable with the very idea of “play.” We would rather do something. Play is not the opposite of work, rather it is a way of putting work in its proper place.¹¹

One method for recapturing the abundant life that Jesus came to give us is to learn to

¹⁰ Carl Honore', *In Praise of Slowness: How a Worldwide Movement Is Challenging the Cult of Speed* (New York: Harper Collins, 2004), 216-218.

¹¹ Donna Schaper, *Sabbath Sense: A Spiritual Antidote for the Overworked* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Books, 2005), 24-25.

play. When we learn to play and live in the abundance of the gift, we become closer to what God aspires us to be.

Living the Abundant Life

The entire purpose of this study was to enlighten a congregation about the inherent value of work, Sabbath, time, leisure, and leisure counseling and the role each plays in living a fuller life. Despite the real or perceived barriers, liberation through sound theology and destruction of improper doctrine, can lead to living life in abundance. The first step in abundant living begins with understanding scripture related to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure and the manner in which Jesus, “The Liberator” lived on earth.

Secondly, understanding the problem of sin and its impact on our individual and collective stewardship of each of the aforementioned topics. Redemption is always possible when our sins and shortcomings are confessed. But what remains imperative is the guidance required through pastoral care and counseling that can guide and direct effort to live abundantly. In this study the action steps generated by the leisure counseling group represent a crucial step toward living guilt-free, abundant lives. Leland Ryken makes a striking point about the enslaving power of rules that govern leisure choices and abundant living. Ryken citing the example of puritan regulation of leisure states:

Baxter [Richard], for example, devised a list of eighteen qualifications that governed a Christian's choice of leisure. It must be for the end of serving God and helping us 'in our ordinary callings and duty.' Recreation must not be profane or obscene, and it must not harm others. Sports are unlawful that 'occasion the multiplying of idle words about them.' Furthermore, if a person chooses a 'less fit and profitable' leisure pursuit 'when a better might be chosen, it is sin.' The net result of such stipulations is to instill an aura of suspicion about leisure, even though theoretical it is unlawful.¹²

The key to liberation and living beyond the man-made constraints to leisure, is simply keeping the example of Jesus in the forefront of our daily living. Jesus lived abundantly and without guilt.

Candy Paull in her book *The Art of Abundance: A Simple Guide to Discovering Life's Treasures* provides a meaning definition of abundant living and challenges that it brings. Paull proceeds to state:

The art of abundance is not about greed or selfishness. The art of abundance is about celebrating life right now, this minute. It is a way of looking at the potential your life holds—the little blessings to be thankful for now and the gifts that God wants to give you, if you'll open your heart to receive them. It's being enthusiastic about life every day, not just on the rare occasions when everything seems to be going your way.

The art of abundance is finding the provision in what is right in front of you, seeing the hand of God already giving you what you need, moment by moment, sharing the abundant blessings God has given with others, and completing the circle by giving by praising the One Who gave the gifts to enjoy.¹³

Abundant living is not an option, it is an entitlement for every Believer. The key is mustering the courage to live abundantly, based on the surety of the promise of scripture (Jn 10:10).

¹² Ryken, *Work and Leisure*, 108.

¹³ Candy Paull, *The Art of Abundance: A Simple Guide to Discovering Life's Treasures* (New York: River Oak, 2002), 12-13.

Change

As we transition from the guilt of enjoying the leisurely pleasures of life to the place of abundance, change is imminent. Old ways die and we grow into the “newness of life.” Change is never easy and with it comes struggle. Often we take two steps back before we can make one substantive step forward. Allowing ourselves to play again when we have been encoded with work can be a gargantuan task. To love God, self, and neighbor as self, enough to declare and keep a Sabbath requires resolve. But the good news is that it can be done.

Marianne Williamson in *The Gift of Change: Spiritual Guidance for a Radically New Life* suggests that we use ritual as a means to begin. Williamson argues that, “One of the ways to powerfully align a material circumstance with an internal reality is through ritual. We can use simple ceremony to imbue any transition with enlightened understanding.”¹⁴ The ritual of protecting sacred time with God and family, playing a round of golf on Saturday morning, or finding a few hours each week to watch the sunset dance upon the ocean, all represent rituals that can be used as a point of departure. Even Jesus escaped to the mountains regularly to enjoy the quiet.

Ritual is our license to begin transformation. Beyond the act of ritual, the most important catalyst to meaningful change is preparation of the heart. As the heart senses the need for change and the Spirit directs accordingly, action must ensue. The wonder of the abundant life and the sheer joy found in Sabbath are within our grasp. Life in its full splendor is available for our living when we are moved by the heart to act.

¹⁴ Marianne Williamson, *The Gift of Change: Spiritual Guidance for a Radically New Life* (New York: Harper SanFrancisco, 2004), 231.

Recommendations and Implications

As a result of this spiritual and empirical investigation, listed below are a series of recommendations and implications for further research in the area of perceived biblical beliefs about the Sabbath, rest, time, work, and leisure.

Recommendations

1. Further definition needs to be given to the term leisure within a biblical/religious context. Leisure is much more than free, unobligated time away from the drudgery and strain of work. If we permit, it can be a portal to experience the richness and abundance of life that God originally intended for humanity. The plethora of social science related definitions must contain the essential religious/spiritual component.
2. Additional research is needed to further explore the relationship between spirituality and leisure.
3. Additional study is also needed to examine the relationship between work and leisure within the context of biblical beliefs.
4. There is a strong need to develop and espouse work and leisure ethics which are grounded in biblical principles and practices.
5. An investigation should ensue to examine the individual and vocation relationships between the work and leisure ethics among practicing clergy and ministry leaders.
6. There is a profound need to further examine the ecclesial responsibilities related to teaching congregants about the biblical and ethical issues relating to Sabbath, work and leisure.

7. There must be a re-visitation of the true meaning of Sabbath and what it means in the daily living of Christians.
8. Pursuant to the conclusion of this research effort, plans for a ministry to assist congregants in pre- and post-retirement planning should be implemented. Part of the challenge is transitioning easily from spending one-third of our lives in the regimen of work into genuinely devoting one-third of the balance of our natural lives to leisure and a Sabbath life-style.
9. Clearly, there needs to be more teaching on work, Sabbath, time, and leisure within the standard forum for teaching within the context. Devoting Pastoral Teachings which are held on the first Sunday of each month to each topic may prove beneficial over time.

Implications

In terms of implications of this research effort, there are several. Note the following series of implications:

1. The data derived from this study may be used to develop new recreation, fellowship, and counseling ministries.
2. Additional teaching based on the preferences expressed by respondents in this study will aid greatly in dissolving tradition-based, doctrinal, or personally generated barriers to Christian leisure.
3. The value of leisure counseling can be escalated if used with retirees and families within the congregation. Time devoted to leisure within the context of retirement or the family can be an asset.

4. Obedience to the Sabbath Commandment represents the beginning to all stewardship issues within a congregation setting. Spiritually and physically disciples make effective disciples. Effective disciples can proceed with few physical, psycho-emotional, or social impairments when engaged in Sabbath lifestyles.

Researchers Closing Comments

The nature of this type of research cannot be minimized. Many would posit that social science and religion are divergent disciplines despite the rich history of the scientific nature of religious inquiry. As society progresses further into the 21st century a critical examination of work and leisure from a theological perspective will be imperative. The very thing, which once enslaved us—work, will be the one thing, which we must balance. As work becomes a more balanced priority in the lives of people on the whole and Christians specifically, the productive use of leisure must be reckoned. The correct use of leisure begins with revisiting our religious/spiritual roots and transforming our contemporary definitions of leisure into ones that reflect the true intent of God when the Creator invoked the Sabbath.

Perhaps this is the vital point of departure, to begin with our conception of Sabbath. If we are able to properly understand the concept of Sabbath then our perspectives related to work, time, leisure, and worship will all be healthier. Achieving balance in our lives will no longer become a challenge. The likelihood of flowing in the rhythm of life, based on upon God's time (*chairos*, *καιρος*) and will for our individual and collective lives, will become more of a reality. Time will become a commodity that

we cherish in the silence of God's presence more so than an elusive commodity, which we spend a lifetime aimlessly attempting to capture.

What will be required of Christians and non-Christians alike in this decade of the 21st century and beyond will be a radical shift in attitudes and outlooks relative to work and leisure. In an address delivered at the Travel Business Roundtable in May 2000, futurist Graham T. Molitor describes the pivotal challenge for humanity. In his address entitled *Here Comes 2015: The Onset of the Leisure Era*, Molitor calls for a "values shift" consonant with leisure pursuits.¹⁵ This new paradigm will focus on experiences, instead of things. As materialism wanes and experiences and self-development ascend, opportunities for a heightened value of leisure, in a spiritual sense, will evolve. Work and leisure may again take on an intrinsically spiritual value.

Edward Cornish, Cynthia G. Wagner, Dan Johnson, and Jeff Miner, encourage society to take advantage of the monumental changes that will occur in work, leisure and spirituality in the new millennium. In their article *The Opportunity Century: 50 Paths to Success in the 21st Century*, the authors challenge society to take advantage of the technological advances that have wrought radical changes in work, which lead to increased leisure. They further imply that addressing our spiritual needs within the context of increased leisure should be a personal and societal priority.¹⁶

Perhaps the solution to the problems of disobedience to the Sabbath commandment and the challenge of balancing work and leisure begins with a healthy

¹⁵ Graham T. Molitor, "Here Comes 2015: The Onset of the Leisure Era," *Vital Speeches of the Day* 66, no. 20 (2000): 627.

¹⁶ Edward Cornish, Cynthia G. Wagner, Dan Johnson, and Jeff Miner, "The Opportunity Century: 50 Paths to Success in the 21st Century," *The Futurist*, 34, no. 1(2000): 2-15.

concept of the role of leisure in the life of the Believer. Perhaps sociologist and leisure researcher, Robert A. Stebbins, was correct when he posited that we must move beyond work and leisure for their own sake and aggressively move toward engagement in “serious leisure.”¹⁷ This concept broadly under girds all that captures the biblical, sociological, and psychological essences that are unique to leisure.

Serious leisure embraces the Sabbath, challenges our attitudes about work in the 21st century, and moves us beyond the notion of busyness and activity. It enables and empowers the individual to assign a high degree of “holiness” to leisure and can catapult the individual into a higher spiritual plane. In this heightened spiritual level, within the context of leisure, the individual can daily love God with all their might and neighbor as self, find the restorative rest that stems from landing in the *karios* of God, rather than being bound by the *chronos* or the clock. Serious leisure prepares us for the day in which we will rest in Christ for eternity. As Stebbins noted, the new quest is to live in leisure lifestyle.¹⁸ I would add that the challenge for the Christian is to develop a “spiritually-based” leisure lifestyle, which encompasses biblical truths and is grounded in the daily challenges of living in this century. That which we practice now prepares us for an eternity of holy leisure. I have yet to discover any passage of scripture contained our holy writ that cites the need to work in heaven or be concerned with chronological, linear time. But the biblical evidence supports that we should prepare for an eternal Sabbath and elevated life of leisure beyond our earthly shores.

Finally, as this dissertation comes to a close, the researcher reflects on an incredible assessment author bell hooks made in her book *Rock My Soul*. The

¹⁷ Robert A. Stebbins, “Serious Leisure,” *Society*, 38, no. 4 (2001): 56-57.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 57.

commentary provided by hooks relates to the spiritual condition of African Americans in the new millennium. Specifically, she speaks to how African Americans can begin to heal from spiritual wounds inflicted from society at-large and wounds which are self-inflicted.

hooks states,

Throughout this nation black people are experiencing a spiritual crisis. We are joined in this crisis by all who love justice, who yearn for peace, and long to live freely. This crisis is for many folks a crisis of values. Longtime believers in freedom and justice, many black folks have betrayed these beliefs in the interest of getting ahead, material gain, and the trappings of success. Greed, through the on-going tyranny of addiction, has been the seductive force luring many black folks down the path to corruption, self-betrayal, and heart-heartedness. Whereas we once were a group that prided ourselves on recognizing the value of inner life, a life that could have meaning and joy even in the midst of struggle, oppression, and exploitation, many of us tossed those belief systems aside, believing that the real way to freedom was by giving in to the dictates of a culture of domination and surrendering one's moral and ethical stance.¹⁹

The salient point that hooks makes, which is applicable to the context, is that the path to individual and collective healing begins with an examination of values. Values which place a premium on obedience to God and the wise stewardship of all that God has given to us, inclusive of the gifts of work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. Liberation, the abundant life, and joy stem from obedience.

¹⁹ bell hooks, *Rock My Soul: Black People and Self-Esteem* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2003), 215.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Beliefs About Time Scale (BATS). The cumulative total of six items contained in the Beliefs About Time sub-scale in the questionnaire. Items are rated using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 on each statement. One represents “strongly disagree” and five representing “strongly agree” on each statement. Scores may range from 5-30 points.

Christian. Name used to designate those who believe in Jesus Christ and seek to live in the ways Jesus taught.¹

Christian Beliefs. The theological content of the Christian faith.²

Christian Doctrines. The teachings of the Christian faith as developed and formulated by the church and its theologians through the centuries.³

Flow. A term created by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi to depict the feeling of optimal experience achieved primarily by creative people, featuring the excitement of deep concentration and the joy of discovery.⁴ Flow manifests itself within the context of work and leisure at the intersection of the challenge of the work experience and the physical and psychological capacity to meet the challenge.

Jubilee. The Old Testament prescription that in every fiftieth year, fields were to be left fallow, slaves set free, and debts cancelled in remembrance that all belongs to God.⁵

Judeo-Christian Tradition. a term used to describe the general religious heritage of the Western world as it has been shaped and influenced by the ideals and values of Judaism and Christianity.⁶

¹ Donald K. McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 47.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Corsini, 383.

⁵ McKim, 151.

Leisure. The cessation of work and freedom from obligation.⁷

Leisure Ethic. the responsible use of leisure, pleasure, and the recognition that God has given good gifts for creatures to enjoy.⁸

Leisure Ethic Scale (LES). the cumulative eight items contained in the Leisure Ethic sub-scale in the questionnaire. Items are rated using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 on each statement. One represents “strongly disagree” and five representing “strongly agree” on each statement. Scores may range from 12-36 points.

Religious Beliefs About Leisure Scale (RBALS). the cumulative twenty items contained in the questionnaire that are designed to assess the strength of agreement about leisure activities based on religiosity. Items are rated using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 on each statement. One represents “strongly disagree” and five representing “strongly agree” on each statement. Scores may range from 20-100 points. Respondents are asked to indicate the source of their belief for each statement contained in the scale.

Rest. commonly refers to a suspension of activity following physical or mental exertion.⁹

Sabbath. the seventh day of the week, set apart for worship and rest. It is a holy day in Judaism. Christian practice has been to observe Sunday as a day for worship in celebration of Christ’s resurrection.¹⁰

Sabbath Beliefs and Practices Scale (SBPS). the cumulative total of ten items contained in the Sabbath Beliefs and Practices sub-scale in the questionnaire. Items are rated using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 on each statement. One represents “strongly disagree” and five representing “strongly agree” on each statement. Scores may range from 10-50 points.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., 159.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Hunter, 1079.

¹⁰ McKim, 244.

Teaching Notes. Short essays on a specific biblical topic which exegetes scripture and illustrates applied biblical points to be used by the reader in daily living.

Theological Beliefs About Leisure Scale (TBALS). The cumulative total of five items contained in the Theological Beliefs About Leisure sub-scale in the questionnaire. Items are rated using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 on each question. One represents “strongly disagree” and five representing “strongly agree” on each question. Scores may range from 5-25 points.

Theological Beliefs About Work Scale (TBAWS). The cumulative total of five items contained in the Theological Beliefs About Work sub-scale in the questionnaire. Items are rated using a Likert-type Scale ranging from 1 to 5 on each statement. One represents “strongly disagree” and five representing “strongly agree” on each statement. Scores may range from 5-25 points.

Theology of Leisure. Language or discourse about God relating to the biblical concepts of the rest and leisure.

Theology of Work. The view that daily work can have meaning and significance as a means of glorifying God and fulfilling God’s vocational call to service.¹¹

Time. The period between the creation of the universe and its ultimate consummation.¹² For the specific purpose of this study, the concern will be for the use of chronological time.

Work. In a Christian perspective, a means of glorifying God by providing for the needs of others and society. The Christian understanding of vocation includes God’s call for persons to perform labor.¹³

Work Ethic. valuing hard work as a goal in life and seeking success as the expression of self-worth. Term is also used to denote the Protestant work ethic, as the concept is a product of Western European culture.¹⁴

Work Ethic Scale. The cumulative total of ten items contained in the Work Ethic sub-scale in the questionnaire. Items are rated using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 7 on each question. One represents “strongly disagree” and seven representing “strongly agree” on each statement. Scores may range from 37-133 points.

¹¹ Ibid., 305.

¹² Ibid., 284.

¹³ Ibid., 151.

¹⁴ Corsini, 1076.

APPENDIX A
DOCTRINAL DOCUMENTS

THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS,
THE LARGER CATECHISM
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA

Fourth Commandment- The Sabbath

Q. 115. Which is the Fourth Commandment?

A. The Fourth Commandment is, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

Q. 116. What is required in the Fourth Commandment?

A. The Fourth Commandment requireth of all men the sanctifying or keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his Word, expressly one whole day in seven; which was the seventh from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, and the first day of the week ever since, and so to continue to the end of the world; which is the Christian Sabbath, and in the New Testament called “the Lord’s Day.”

Q. 117. How is the Sabbath or Lord’s Day to be sanctified?

A. The Sabbath, or Lord’s Day, is to be sanctified by an holy resting all that day, not only from such works as are at all times sinful, but even from such worldly employments and recreations as are on other days lawful; and making it our delight to spend the whole time (except so much of it as is to be taken up in works of necessity and mercy) in the public and private exercise of God’s worship. And, to that end, we are to prepare our hearts, and with such foresight, diligence, and moderation, to dispose, and seasonably to dispatch our worldly business, that we may be the more free and fit for the duties of the day.

Q. 118. Why is the charge of keeping the Sabbath more specially directed to governors of families and other superiors?

A. The charge of keeping the Sabbath is more specially directed to governors of families and other superiors, because they are bound not only to keep it themselves, but to see that it be observed by all those that are under their charge; and because they are prone oftentimes to hinder them by employments of their own.

Q. 119. What are the sins forbidden in the Fourth Commandment?

A. The sins in the Fourth Commandment are: all omissions of the duties required, all careless, negligent, and unprofitable performing of them, and being weary of them; all

profaning the day by idleness, and doing that which is in itself sinful; and by all needless works, words, and thoughts about our worldly employments and recreations.

Q. 120. What are the reasons annexed to the Fourth Commandment, the more to enforce it?

A. The reasons annexed to the Fourth Commandment, the more to enforce it, are taken from the equity of it, God allowing us six days of seven for our own affairs, and reserving but one for himself, in these words, “Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work;” from God’s challenging a special propriety in that day. “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God;” from the example of God who “in six days . . . made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day”; and from that blessing which God put upon that day, not only in sanctifying it to be a holy day for his service, but in ordaining it to be a means of blessing to us in our sanctifying it, “wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

Q. 121. Why is the word “remember” set in the beginning of the Fourth Commandment?

A. The word “remember” is set in the beginning of the Fourth Commandment, partly because of the great benefit of remembering it, we being thereby helped in our preparation to keep it; and, in keeping it, better to keep all the rest of the Commandments and to continue a thankful remembrance of the two great benefits of creation and redemption, which contain a short abridgement of religion: and partly because we are ready to forget it, for that there is less light of nature for it, and yet it restraineth our natural liberty in things at other times lawful; that it cometh but once in seven days, and many worldly businesses come between, and too often take off our minds from thinking of it, either to prepare for it, or to sanctify it; and that Satan with his instruments much labor to blot out the glory, and even the memory of it, and to bring in all irreligion and impiety.¹

¹ Presbyterian Church (USA). *The Book of Confessions* (Louisville: Presbyterian Church USA, 2002), 214-215.

From the Pastor's Desk: Dancing at a Church Sponsored Function

(Pastor Baines, Jr., 12/03)

In response to the questions and tension that are stimulated by doing the “Electric Slide” at a church fellowship, “it seemed good to me ... to write unto thee ...” (see Lk. 1:3) to share some pastoral thoughts. First, God wants His people to be holy (see I Pet. 1:15-16). However, holiness, sanctity, purity, separation from the wickedness of the world and the devil, or living in the will of God is not simply a matter of living by a list of boring do’s and don’ts. The best demonstration of holiness is to love God and love people, as one loves ones’ self (Mk. 12:29-31).

Second, the notions of coming out from among the world and abstaining from anything that seems evil needs to be balanced with, not only David’s dancing in II Samuel 6:16 but more interestingly, Jesus’ supplying wine for a wedding celebration after the initial wine had been consumed (see Jn. 2:1-10). In other words, one cannot absolutely declare that dancing is wrong because it is worldly or appears evil. These are arguable points but not conclusive. Paul teaches in Romans 15:14 that there is nothing unclean of itself, when he was discussing the notion of eating meats that had been offered to idol gods.

Third, the best argument that one may have for abstaining from dancing is that it is a sin against ones conscious (see Romans 14:14-23). For some dancing will lead to other things that are definitely sins. An analogy may be that of the recovering alcoholic who abstains from even a drink of wine after his/her meal, as a way of not even getting close to the sin of being drunk. To such an argument, I say, if there is good reason for you not to dance then don’t dance. However, don’t put your restriction on others who do not have your same issues.

Fourth, the dancing that I am sanctioning does have restrictions. There should be no overtly ungodly lyrics, movements, or dress. There is enough music with no words, neutral words, or clean words that we do not have to subject ourselves to filth. One can move to the beat, have fun (see Pro. 17:22), and celebrate without being sexual or provocative in movement. There is no need to wear overly revealing clothing or too little clothes.

Fifth, as the preacher said in Ecclesiastes, there is a time and place for everything (Eccl. 3:14). The Electric Slide may be fine for many Christians at a Christian party; however, the Christian worship experience is another matter and beyond the scope of these brief comments.

Sixth, Romans 14:14-23 also teaches that those who are not restricted ought not cause harm to those who are restricted. We ought not flaunt our liberty and be a stumbling block to others. At our party, there is an obvious transitioning to the dancing period. This

is the time for those who have problems with dancing to leave and meet us at something more palatable. If our church family has real problems with this matter, I am willing to prohibit dancing at our functions. However, the prohibition is in response to our legalism and tradition.²

² Robert E. Baines, Jr., *From the Pastors Desk: Dancing at a Church Sponsored Function*, 1.

APPENDIX B
AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENTS

**REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF RESEARCH ACTIVITY INVOLVING
HUMAN SUBJECTS**

Date: April 30, 2005

To: Rev. Dr. Robert E. Baines, Jr.- Pastor
Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, 27 N. Gettysburg, Dayton, OH 45417

From: Rev. Steven N. Waller, Sr.- Doctor of Ministry Candidate, United Theological Seminary

Name of Primary Research Investigator(s): Rev. Steven N. Waller, Sr.

Contact Information: 6140 Gander Rd. East, Dayton, OH 45424, 937-236-2699-Home, 865-974-1279-Business, 937-268-2011-Church, e-mail: snwallersr@hotmail.com

Nature of Research Activity: Conduct survey research involving 75-100 congregants; conduct a series of three personal interviews and group meetings with 8-10 congregants pertaining to beliefs/perceptions related to work, Sabbath, time, and leisure. Participation in both facets of the inquiry is voluntary. There will be no compensation involved for participation.

Associate or Collaborating Investigator(s):

Name Jimmy Calloway, Ph.D.	Institution Georgia State University Associate Professor Dept. of Kinesiology and Health University Plaza Atlanta, GA 30303 404-651-3210- Office 404-651-4814 E-mail: jcallowa@gsu.edu
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Roger L. Coles, Ed.D.	Central Michigan University Professor & Chairperson Dept. of RPLSA 102 Finch Hall Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859 517-774-3858 rcoles1@cmich.edu
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Rev. Bonnie Bowman Thurston, Ph.D.

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
 Professor Emeritus- New Testament
 616 N. Highland Ave.
 Pittsburgh, PA 15206
 bthurston@att.net

Proposed Starting Date of Research Activity: May 1, 2005

Expected Duration of Research Activity: September 30, 2005

PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RESEARCH ACTIVITY:

1. (a) Are you contributing to the design or conduct of the study? Yes
- (b) Do you expect your name to appear on a publication resulting from this study?
 Yes

Please describe your role in this research activity: Researcher will develop and implement research design, collect and report data per Doctor of Ministry program requirements.

2. Where are the subjects of this research activity located?
 Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, 27 N. Gettysburg Ave., Dayton, OH 45417
3. If the research activity is taking place elsewhere, will you have direct contact or intervention with the human subjects? Yes.

Group meetings may take place at an off-site location to be determined by the group (i.e.-private room of a restaurant).

4. What kind of data (e.g., private information, responses to questionnaires) will be involved?

General demographic data, in addition to data related to beliefs/perceptions about work, rest, Sabbath and leisure.

Will you be _____ these data?

Collecting: Yes

Receiving: Yes

Sending: No

5. Do the data:

(a) Already exist? No

(b) Or are they being collected for the express purpose of this study? Yes

If "Yes", please describe:

Data will be collected via questionnaire for the general sample population and via questionnaire and interviews with the small group.

6. Do the samples or data come from individuals who may need special safeguards (e.g., individuals under 18 years of age, pregnant women, or prisoners)? No
7. Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, through its Pastor Rev. Dr. Robert E. Baines, Jr., reserves the right to review and approve the use of data that are coded and may be linked in any way to an individual, or that contain personal identifiers. The use of data that are anonymous may be considered for exemption from review and approval.

Can the samples or data that you expect to receive, collect or send be linked by you or your collaborator(s) to identifiable research subjects? No

Please attach separate sheet if there is anything else you wish to add or any answer you wish to amplify.

Protocol Approval Date: _____

Protocol Expiration Date: _____

Authorizing Signature: _____ Date: _____

CONSENT FORM FOR NON-MEDICAL HUMAN SUBJECTS

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, CONTACT: Steven N. Waller, 6140 Gander Rd. East, Dayton, Ohio, 45424, 937-236-2699 or Dr. Anne McWilliams, Mentor/Assistant Professor, Pastoral Care and Counseling, United Theological Seminary, 1810 Harvard Blvd., Dayton, Ohio 45406, 937-278-5817.

DESCRIPTION: You are invited to participate in an action research project entitled “Recapturing the Abundant Life: Leisure Counseling as Pastoral Care”. The purpose of the research study is twofold: (1) to ascertain congregational attitudes and beliefs about work, Sabbath, time, leisure and select leisure activities, and (2) to determine the impact of bible-based leisure counseling on helping group participants lead balanced abundant lives. In Phase I of the project, a congregational survey will be administered, with participation being voluntary. In Phase II, leisure counseling will be conducted in an individual and small group format. Participants in the group will be required to complete a pre-test, read the associated Teaching Notes and respond to follow-up items, participate in three (3) counseling sessions and complete a post-test.

To protect the anonymity and confidentiality of participants, audio and visual taping of group sessions will not be conducted.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: There are no inherent risks associated with participation in this study. The benefits which may reasonably be expected to result from this study are a heightened level of understanding of the role that work, Sabbath, time and leisure play in living the “abundant life”. Beyond the aforementioned benefit, we cannot and do not guarantee or promise that you will receive any additional benefits from this study.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation in Phase I of this study (congregational survey) will take approximately thirty minutes. If selected to participate in Phase II, the leisure counseling group, approximately eight (8) hours will be required to complete pre-testing, reading the associated Teaching Notes and responding to follow-up items, participation in three (3) counseling sessions and completion of the post-test.

PAYMENTS: There will be no compensation for participation in this study. Your participation is strictly voluntary.

SUBJECT'S RIGHTS: If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions.

CONFIDENTIALITY: All information collected as a part of this study will be properly coded using accepted methods to protect the identity of the participant.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS: If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact -

anonymously, if you wish – Doctoral Studies Office, United Theological Seminary, 1810 Harvard Blvd., Dayton, Ohio, 45406-4599, 937-278-5817, ext. 2314, e-mail: doctoralstudies@united.edu.

The extra copy of this consent form is for you to keep.

SIGNATURE _____ **DATE** _____

APPENDIX C
SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

RECAPTURING THE ABUNDANT LIFE: LEISURE COUNSELING AS PASTORAL CARE

Research Project Conducted By

REV. STEVEN N. WALLER, SR., PH.D

Research conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

United Theological Seminary 1810 Harvard Blvd. Dayton, OH 45406

Your participation in this study is voluntary and there is no compensation involved for completing this questionnaire. All responses are coded to protect your identity. The results of data collected may be used in public presentations and professional journals.

SECTION I- YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT THE SABBATH

PART A- SABBATH BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

This scale measures your attitudes about the SABBATH and your SABBATH PRACTICES. Please answer each statement by CIRCLING the number that most accurately represents the strength of your disagreement or agreement with each of the following statements (1= STRONGLY DISAGREE, 5= STRONGLY AGREE):

	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. God created the Sabbath.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The Sabbath was made for man.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The Sabbath is holy and is to be kept.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The Sabbath was created for man to rest and worship God.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Observing the Sabbath allows for both physical and spiritual rest.	1	2	3	4	5
6. People should not work on the Sabbath (Sunday).	1	2	3	4	5
7. I have set aside a day in the week to observe the Sabbath.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I feel obligated to observe the Sabbath.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Observing the Sabbath is a part of my obedience to God.	1	2	3	4	5
10. It is a sin not to observe the Sabbath.	1	2	3	4	5

PART B- YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT TIME

This scale measures your attitudes about TIME. Please answer each statement by CIRCLING the number that most accurately represents the strength of your disagreement or agreement with each of the following statements (1= Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree):

	SD	D	N	A	SA
11. It is important to use time wisely.	1	2	3	4	5
12. It is important to set aside time to work.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I do not have enough time and sometimes feel rushed.	1	2	3	4	5
14. It is important to set aside time to rest.	1	2	3	4	5
15. It is important to make time to worship God.	1	2	3	4	5
16. It is important to make time for leisure/fun.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION II- YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT WORK

PART A- WORK ETHIC SCALE

This scale measures your attitudes about the **WORK**. Please respond to each statement by **CIRCLING** the number which most accurately represents the strength of your disagreement or agreement with each of the following statements. 1=Strongly Disagree and 7=Strongly Agree

	SD			N			SA
17. Our society would have fewer problems if people had less leisure time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Most people who don't succeed in life are just plain lazy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I often feel I would be more successful if I sacrificed certain pleasures.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. People should have more leisure time to spend just relaxing ®.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. Anyone who is able and willing to work hard has a good chance of succeeding.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. People who fail at a job have usually not tried hard enough.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Life would have very little meaning if we did not have to work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Hard work offers little guarantee of success ®.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. Life would be more meaningful if we had more leisure time ®.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. If one works hard enough he/she is likely to make a good life for his/herself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

PART B: YOUR THEOLOGICAL BELIEFS ABOUT WORK

This scale measures your theological beliefs about work. Please answer each statement by **CIRCLING** the number that most accurately represents the strength of your disagreement or agreement with each of the following statements (1= Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree):

	SD	D	N	A	SA
27. Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden we must work.	1	2	3	4	5
28. God wants me to glorify him in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Work is an act of godliness.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Work helps to remove idleness from the day and avoid temptations.	1	2	3	4	5
31. If one does not work, one should not eat.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION III- YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT LEISURE

PART-A: LEISURE ETHIC SCALE

This scale measures your ethical beliefs about leisure. Please answer each statement by **CIRCLING** the number that most accurately represents the strength of your disagreement or agreement with each of the following statements (1= Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree):

	SD	D	N	A	SA
32. Increased leisure time is bad for society ®.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Success means having ample time to pursue leisure activities.	1	2	3	4	5

34. Work takes too much of our time, leaving little time to relax.	1	2	3	4	5
35. Leisure time activities are more interesting than work.	1	2	3	4	5
36. Leisure is important to our physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.	1	2	3	4	5

PART B: YOUR THEOLOGICAL BELIEFS ABOUT LEISURE

This scale measures your theological beliefs about the leisure. Please answer each statement by CIRCLING the number that most accurately represents the strength of your disagreement or agreement with each of the following statements (1= Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree):

	SD	D	N	A	SA
37. Leisure is an important biblical concept.	1	2	3	4	5
38. God wants me to have leisure time.	1	2	3	4	5
39. Being at leisure helps me to contemplate on the goodness of God.	1	2	3	4	5
40. Being at leisure helps restore my body and spirit.	1	2	3	4	5
41. Being silent, listening to God is an important part of being at leisure.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION IV- SCRIPTURE, CHURCH TRADITION AND PERSONAL BELIEFS IN LEISURE CHOICES

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS ABOUT LEISURE SCALE

Religiosity is simply defined as the importance of religion in a person's life. It's dimensions are often measured by: (1) attitudes toward religion; (2) religious activity; and (3) religious beliefs. This scale is designed to assess the strength of your beliefs about common leisure activities from a religious perspective (1= Strongly Do Not Believe; 2=Do Not Believe; 3=Neutral; 4=Believe; 5=Strongly Believe). Based on your study of the Bible, your understanding of previous or current teachings of the church, and your personal beliefs, please circle the number which best represents how strongly you feel about each of the following statements and then place an "X" in one column which best indicates the source or sources of your beliefs.

	SD	D	N	B	SB	Scripture	Church Teaching	Personal Belief
42. Dancing is a sin	1	2	3	4	5			
43. Dancing at a church sponsored social event is fine	1	2	3	4	5			
44. Drinking alcoholic beverages is a sin	1	2	3	4	5			
45. Drinking alcoholic beverages at a public place such as a restaurant is fine	1	2	3	4	5			
46. Gambling is a sin	1	2	3	4	5			
47. Gambling at a public location such a casino or riverboat is fine	1	2	3	4	5			
48. Playing Bingo for money or prizes is a sin	1	2	3	4	5			
49. Playing Bingo at a church sponsored social event is fine	1	2	3	4	5			
50. Playing cards is wrong	1	2	3	4	5			
51. Playing cards as a social activity with family or friends is fine	1	2	3	4	5			
52. Watching "R" rated movies is a sin	1	2	3	4	5			
53. Watching "R" rated movies as a part of a social outing is fine	1	2	3	4	5			
54. Watching television is a sin	1	2	3	4	5			
55. Watching "family oriented" television shows is fine	1	2	3	4	5			
56. Failing to exercise regularly is a sin	1	2	3	4	5			
57. Attending sporting events on Sunday is a sin	1	2	3	4	5			

58. Attending sporting events on days other than Sunday is fine	1	2	3	4	5			
59. Attending a comedy show at a comedy club is a sin	1	2	3	4	5			
60. Listening to secular (non-church) music is a sin	1	2	3	4	5			
61. Listening to all types of music (R & B, Jazz, Gospel, etc.) is fine	1	2	3	4	5			

SECTION V- DEMOGRAPHIC/OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

62. Gender: Male: _____ Female: _____

63. Age: 21-30: _____ 31-40: _____ 41-50: _____ 51-60: _____ 61-70: _____ 70+: _____

64. How many years have you been a member of this church? _____

65. Are you currently involved in a ministry in your church? Yes: _____ No: _____. If yes, how many hours per week are you involved with the ministry _____

66. Marital Status: Married: _____ Single: _____ Divorced: _____ Widowed: _____ Separated: _____

67. Income: \$0-\$10,000 _____ \$10,001-\$20,000 _____ \$20,001-\$30,000 _____ \$30,001-\$40,000 _____
\$40,001-\$50,000 _____ \$50,001-\$60,000 _____ \$60,001-\$70,000 _____ \$70,001-\$80,000 _____
\$80,001-\$90,000 _____ \$90,001-\$100,000 _____ above \$100,001 _____68. Highest Degree Earned: High School Diploma _____ Associates Degree _____ Bachelors Degree _____
Masters Degree _____ Specialist _____ Doctorate _____ Other _____69. Please Circle The Highest Number of Years of Education: 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
21 22 23 24 25 2670. Occupation: Professional: _____ Technical/Trade: _____ Business Owner: _____ Student: _____
Other: _____

71. How many hours do you work per week? _____

72. How many hours of leisure time do you have in a week? _____

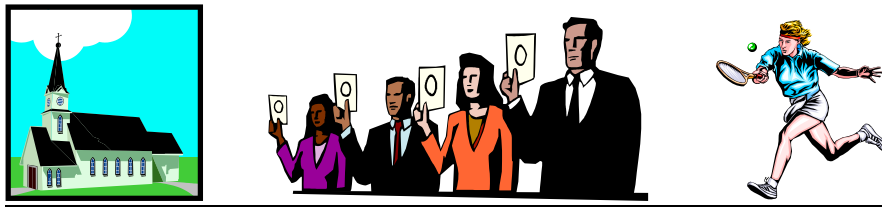
73. I believe that the Church should do more teaching on (check as many as apply): Sabbath _____
Sacred Time _____ Rest (Physical and Spiritual) _____ Work _____ Leisure _____74. Please rate the importance of each of the following items on a scale of 1 to 5, with "1" meaning "not important" and "5" meaning "very important": Sabbath _____ Time _____ Rest (Physical and Spiritual) _____
Work _____ Leisure _____

75. Would you be interested in participating in any of the following support services: (1) Leisure counseling _____; (2) Pre or Post Retirement Support _____; (3) Sabbath Keeping Group _____.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION. PLEASE PROVIDE ANY COMMENTS YOU MAY HAVE IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW. THANK YOU!

Teaching Notes

Recapturing the Abundant Life: Leisure Counseling as Pastoral Care



Rev. Steven N. Waller, Ph.D.

**Phase II of a Project Conducted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Ministry**

**United Theological Seminary
Dayton, OH**

Participant Code: _____

Table of Contents

Unit I	Work	4
Unit II	Sabbath	7
Unit III	Time	10
Unit IV	Leisure	11

Instructions

Thank you for consenting to help me with Phase II of my doctoral project. Please be aware that your responses are confidential and this document is coded so that your identity cannot be revealed.

Please read each set of teaching notes and after completion, prayerfully respond to each of the “Questions for Reflection.” Additionally, please complete the section entitled “Action Toward Living the Abundant Life.”

Please DO NOT separate the sections of this document. Upon completion, please return it to me on Sunday, January 15, 2006.

If there are any questions, please feel free to call me at home at 236-2699, by cellular at 412-414-4365 or e-mail me at snwallersr@hotmail.com.

Blessings, and again, thank you for helping me with this project.

Teaching Notes- Unit I- Work

(Rev. S. Waller, Sept. 2005)

Introduction: The key idea in this lesson is that God established work as a period of labor for humankind. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to exercise good stewardship and avoid idolatry in our work lives.

Theological Importance of the Topic:

The first occurrence of “work” is found in the Genesis 1-2, commonly known as the “Creation Narrative.” In Genesis 1-2 illustrate God at work and then we find Adam and all descendants in chapter 3 being subjected to work as the penalty for Adamic sin in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:17-20). Equally important, especially as noted in the Creation Narrative, God established a pattern of work and rest for humanity to follow. Because we are created in the image of God (Gen 1:26-27), then it is reasonable to expect that God’s creation will imitate what God does. God requires people to work on this side of heaven, but as we labor, we must also engage in rest to restore the body, mind, and spirit.

Work and the African American Experience

Work was and remains a linchpin in the African American experience. It continues to be a critical determinant in African American society, culture, and the religious experience. Since slavery, work has been in forefront of the experience. It is an unfortunate fact that one’s personal value, self-esteem, and position within the community of faith are correlated to ones employment status. The implications of work and how contemporary African American Christians perceive work has far-reaching social, psycho-emotional, health, familial, spiritual implications.

The apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 3:10 wrote: “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.” Frequently, this passage is cited as an admonition against slothfulness and unemployment. The penalty is understood in the African American experience that if one does not have employment because of slothfulness, then the community should not support one financially. Despite the fact that employment is an extremely complex phenomenon in the African American tradition, theologically speaking, to be unemployed without “good cause” is counted as sin. Work has an “elevated” position in the lives of many African Americans because of its social, psychological, cultural, and moral imports. It is not uncommon for some African Americans to find themselves in a position of overworking due to the prime value of being employed. Entering and sustaining employment in the workforce becomes a high priority. Work, if not placed in its proper perspective, can become an idol or “god.” Let’s work on having a balanced work life and not creating an “idol.”

Work as an Idol

Jeanne E. Sherrow in *It’s About Time: A Look at Leisure Lifestyle & Christianity* addresses the issue of work as an “idol.” Sherrow notes “success at all costs has become our call to worship. Our call to worship is at the shrine of success and achievement.”¹ Sherrow proceeds to state the following: “The idol of success and achievement is high and lifted up and greatly revered in the technological society in which we find ourselves. And the reward for such

¹ Sherrow, 61.

adulation? Advancement and promotion, longer hours, more responsibility, higher salaries, less time with one's loved ones (but the ability to buy more for them), greater prestige." Let's work on not allowing work to become an idol in our lives, for we know God will destroy idols.

Workaholism

Ultimately what evolves is an unhealthy, biblically unsound belief about work and its place in the life of a believer. Sherrow notes "workaholism" will manifest. The term is used to define a state of an individual who has a dependence on overwork, a dependence which has a notable disturbance on the rest of his/her life." Someone is struggling with workaholism when s/he has a focused relationship with work that excludes time for self-nurturing, friends and love relationships. The by-products of this condition include preoccupation with nothing but work, weariness, being overscheduled, neglecting of family friends and loved one, and most importantly a spiritually impaired relationship with God.

Martin C. Helldoffer in his book, *Work Trap: Redefining Leisure, Redefining Work* assigns the term "work fixation" to the previously discussed phenomenon.² Work fixation is not the same as spending long hours at an office. Nor is it necessarily avoided by spending too much time pursuing leisure time activities. Rather, work fixation has to do with a way of living, of approaching life, and of being present to whatever we are involved in. Let's work on avoiding becoming fixated on work.

Disconnecting Work and Faith

Mary Holder Naegeli in *A Passion for the Gospel: Confessing Jesus Christ for the 21st Century* suggests that we have disconnected our faith from work and thus work has become "compartmentalized."³ Naegeli infers that as a result of the compartmentalization of work and faith, Christians are faced with adopting a dualistic set of values for their lives at and outside of work, devaluing work, or latching on tightly to the secular trappings of work, as ways to reconcile the conflict. Naegeli insists that compartmentalizing work and faith is emotionally and spiritually exhausting, as well as unproductive.

Conclusion

Work is a blessing and is vital to our existence on this side of heaven. Work can also be a great curse when its place is over-valued and misunderstood from a biblical and theological perspective. The high calling is to find the balance between work and leisure in one's life. Ultimately, we must become liberating from the "*work trap*" by knowing what God's intentions are for work in our lives, through scripture, and then begin to practice what the word of God instructs us to do relative to work.

² Helldorfer, 14.

³ Naegeli, 164-166.

Questions for Reflection

Do you believe what the scriptures say about work?

Based on your understanding of scripture presented in the teaching notes, how important is work to your faith journey?

Are you currently working?

What appears to be your greatest hindrance to managing work in your life in a biblical manner?

Action Toward Living the Abundant Life

Based on the content of the teaching notes, my study of scripture, reflection and prayer, I am committing to do the following three things to help me better manage work in my life:

1.

2.

3.

Comments

Thank you for your assistance. Know that God will bless your faithfulness (Heb 11:6).

Teaching Notes- Unit II- Sabbath

(Rev. S. Waller, Sept. 2005)

Introduction: The key idea in this lesson is that God established the Sabbath as a period of physical and spiritual rest and reflection. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to keep a Sabbath as a way of dedicating time to commune with God, rest, and reflect upon God's goodness.

Theological Importance of the Topic:

God requires that all of creation rest. For humankind, God gave the Sabbath as a time to cease from the rigors of work. The idea behind Sabbath is to provide a holy time of worship, rest, and fellowship with God and family. Exodus 16:23-30 addresses Sabbath as a one-day prohibition of work in all forms. It is important for the believer to understand that the Fourth Commandment is exactly that a commandment. God is not suggesting that we spend one day out of the week resting, relaxing, being thankful, and fellowshiping, it is mandated. Believers are not to become "legalist" with the Sabbath commandment, but are to make a true effort observe and keep a Sabbath in their lives (Mk 2:23-27).

Sabbath in the Judeo-Christian Tradition

The manifestation of obedience to the will of God for humankind is taking the time to rest and observe a Sabbath. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, Sabbath is observed in a variety of ways. What is of paramount importance is to understand the biblical basis for the observance as noted in Exodus 16:23-30 and 20:8-11. As expressed in Numbers 20:8-11, believers are compelled to: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work ... For in six days the Lord made the heavens and earth, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." (Ex 20:8-11, NIV) Observance of the Sabbath establishes the baseline from which we develop an ethic of both work and leisure. The term is derived from the Hebrew word "*Shabbat*," which calls for cessation or rest. ***Let's work on realizing that Sabbath can be observed in many ways and what is really important is the setting aside of time to observe a Sabbath to cease from unnecessary work and worship God.***

The Sabbath in the Old Testament

The Sabbath was a day of rest "sanctified to the Lord" (Gen 2:1-3; Ex 16:23; 31:15; Deut 5:14). All work was forbidden, the prohibition including strangers as well as Israelites, beasts as well as men (Ex 20:8-10; 31:13-17; Deut 5:12-14). The following particular actions are mentioned as forbidden: cooking (Ex 16:23); gathering manna (Ex 16:26); plowing and reaping (Ex 34:21); lighting a fire for cooking (Ex. 35:3); gathering wood (Num 15:32); carrying burdens (Jer 17:21-22); pressing grapes, bringing in sheaves, and loading animals (II Esd 13:15); trading (II Esd 13:15). Travel was restricted to a distance of 2000 cubits (between five and six furlongs), or a "Sabbath day's journey" (Acts 1:12). ***Let's work on understanding God's intent and the historical and cultural backdrop to Sabbath in the Old Testament so we can give proper context to scripture.***

The Sabbath in the New Testament

Christ, while observing the Sabbath, set Himself in word and act against this absurd rigorism, which made man a slave of the day. He reproved the scribes and Pharisees for putting an intolerable burden on men's shoulders (Mt 23:4), and proclaimed the principle that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mk 2:27). He cured on the Sabbath, and defended His disciples for plucking ears of corn on that day. In His arguments with the Pharisees on this account, He showed that the Sabbath is not broken in cases of necessity or by acts of charity (Mt 12:3; Mk 2:25; Lk 6:3; 16:5). The apostle Paul enumerates the Sabbath among the Jewish observances, which are not obligatory on Christians (Col 2:16; Gal 4:9-10; Rom 14:5). The Gentile converts held their religious meetings on Sunday (Acts 10:7; 1 Cor 16:2) and with the disappearance of the Jewish Christian churches this day was exclusively observed as the Lord's Day. Let's be mindful of the actions and words of Jesus. ***Let's work on setting aside a Sabbath day, but not be bound by the legalistic interpretation of the Sabbath.***

Sabbath Observance in the Baptist Tradition

One common declarations of faith in print for Black Baptists are the twenty-four *Articles of Faith*. Article XV, *Of the Christian Sabbath*, addresses the importance of the Christian Sabbath to the lives of practicing Baptists. The aforementioned article states the following: "*We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath; and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for the rest that remaineth for the people of God.*"⁴

Despite the theological import of this particular articles and its importance in the daily living of congregants, it remains a source of tension. The statement "abstain from secular labor" in the article lies in tension with the work lives of many congregants. Some have "non-traditional" work schedules and cannot observe the Sunday as a Sabbath Day as recommended. Secondly, serious questions surface when an attempt to define what the term "sinful recreations" constitutes. A major concern is does one sin against God due to non-observance of the Christian Sabbath due to being a faithful steward of the job that God has blessed one with? Does a dinner and "R" rated movie on Sunday comprise "sinful recreation?" It is highly probable that interpretation of this Article and associated doctrine related to observance of Sabbath could impede the development of healthy attitudes relative to Christian leisure. Here is an instance in which congregants can be easily bound and held captive by denominational tradition. ***As Black Baptist, let's work on staying true to the commandment and our tradition, but at the same time, using good judgment to determine what is best for each of us.***

Conclusion

Let's work on keeping a Sabbath as God has commanded us to do. In the fast paced world we live in we all need time to worship God, and obtain the physical and spiritual rest required for the journey toward heaven. God will bless our faithfulness. (Heb 11:6)

⁴ Jordan, 43.

Questions for Reflection

Do you believe what the scriptures say about the Sabbath?

Based on your understanding of scripture presented in the teaching notes, how important is keeping a Sabbath to your faith journey?

Are you currently setting aside a day to observe a Sabbath?

What appears to be your greatest hindrance to keeping a Sabbath?

Action Toward Living the Abundant Life

Based on the content of the teaching notes, my study of scripture, reflection and prayer, I am committing to do the following three things to help me declare and keep a Sabbath:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Comments

Thank you for your assistance. Know that God will bless your faithfulness (Heb 11:6).

Teaching Notes- Unit III- Time

(Rev. S. Waller, Sept. 2005)

Introduction: The key idea in this lesson is that God gives humankind time for all purposes on our Christian journey, including time to worship, work, keep a Sabbath, rest, and engage in Christian leisure. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to be wise stewards of the time that God gives us.

Theological Importance of the Topic:

Time is a vital biblical concept that is embraced within our faith. Time from a biblical concept, is utilized from both temporal and eternal perspectives. Generally, we are more concerned with the temporal aspects of time. Time is utilized to give meaning to many of the points along our Christian journey. From a Judeo-Christian perspective, we view time as a straight line, with a beginning and an end, with all points governed by the clock and calendar. Because of our linear conception of time (Ps 89:47), we attempt to crowd as much activity into our days as we possibly can. As a result, we become overly busy with activity and are unwise stewards of time (Lk 12:42-48). Our greatest struggle with time is nothing having sufficient amounts of time, which lies in direct opposition to God being a God of supply of all things, including time ((Phil 4:19).

A Time for Every Purpose

Solomon, the writer of Ecclesiastes (Qouheloth), purveys the wisdom of time in the following passage:

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. (Eccl 3:1-11, NRSV)

Solomon wisely let's us know that life is very busy and often our time is challenged. However, the critical point Solomon makes in this passage is that we must take the time to enjoy life along the journey. ***Let's work on making sure that we allocate time to not only do God's work, but also enjoy the blessings of family and the "fun stuff" God provides for us along the way.*** In this same passage of scripture, Solomon reminds us three important items: (1) we really do not gain much from working all the time; (2) there

is a suitable place and time for all of life's activity; and (3) no matter how hard we try we will fully never be able to understand God nor all he has done since the beginning of time. Withstanding Solomon's points for our living, ***let's work on having a balanced life of worship and study, where we seek a greater understanding of God, work, leisure, and time.***

Humanity is reminded by this passage that time is ordered. Over the course of one's life operating with "*kairos*," or "God's time" is more important than being driven by "*chronos*," time as defined by man, using the clock and calendar to track time. There is a negative aspect of being driven by the calendar. Stress, anxiety, over-committing, familial and relational strains are all by-products of being driven by the clock. Health and wellness professionals have written extensively and produced data that help us to see the danger of living life by the clock, calendar and palm pilot. ***Let's work on not being "clock watchers" but learn to live in God's time to enjoy life.***

The Pressure to Make the Best Use of Time

The apostle Paul in his letter to the church at Ephesus makes a statement about time that perhaps drives our contemporary insatiable desire to capture and use "productively" every moment recorded by the clock. While pointing the church toward problems with persecution, Paul advises his congregation to get as much done while possible toward building the kingdom, saying "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph 5:16, NKJV). Eugene Peterson author of an alternative translation of the Bible, *The Message* states the same passage in the following manner, "Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times!" (Eph 5:16, *The Message*) The key to this passage is sensibility in the use of time. God's desire for us is to prepare for the return of Jesus, but also to take time to enjoy the many wonders of life until Jesus returns. ***Let's work on properly understanding the mean of scripture as we work on stewardship of time.***

Time, unfortunately, has been made the deciding factor in our directives from the Creator to work, rest, observe the Sabbath and partake in leisure. Out inherent problem as Christians is the lack of understanding relative to the role of time in our lives, its use and misuse, stewardship, and the insatiable urge to force as many activities into a designated window of time as possible, commonly known as "time deepening." If believers genuinely trust that God is a God of supply (Phil 4:19), then the provision of ample amounts of time to accomplish all that God has in store for our lives is but a small task for God. ***Let's work prayerfully, on being wise stewards of the time God gives us and avoid abusing the time in our lives.***

Conclusion

Let's be mindful that God gives humankind time for all purposes on our Christian journey, including time to worship, work, keep a Sabbath, rest, and engage in Christian leisure. Let's commit ourselves to the wise stewardship of the time that God gives us. God has much in store for those who obey Him (Heb 11:6)

Questions for Reflection

Do you believe what the scriptures say about time and its wise use?

Based on your understanding of scripture presented in the teaching notes, how important is the wise use of time to your faith journey?

In your opinion, are you using your time wisely?

What appears to be your greatest hindrance to managing time in your life in a biblical manner?

Action Toward Living the Abundant Life

Based on the content of the teaching notes, my study of scripture, reflection and prayer, I am committing to do the following three things to help me better manage time in my life:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Comments

Thank you for your assistance. Know that God will bless your faithfulness (Heb 11:6).

Teaching Notes- Unit IV- Leisure

(Rev. S. Waller, Sept. 2005)

Introduction: The key idea in this lesson is that God established leisure as a period of fun and enjoyment. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to seize opportunities for leisure as part of abundant Christian living.

Theological Importance of the Topic:

There is more than sufficient biblical evidence to support fun and enjoyment as a part of Christian living. It is not God's desire for believers simply to work, rest, and worship. Each of the aforementioned is a part of glorifying God. But we also glorify God when we learn to relax (Ps 23:2), laugh (Prov 17:22a), dance (2 Sam 6:14), have fun (Eccl 8:15), play (Ex 32:6) and enjoy the wonder of God's creation. Jesus took time out of his busy schedule to attend a wedding in Cana (Jn 2:1-3) where they laughed, danced, fellowshiped and even drank wine. It is not God's desire for us to be overly pious, overworked nor without fun and enjoyment in our lives.

Definition of Leisure:

There is only one reference to the word "leisure" in the entire bible (Mk 6:31). There are many contemporary definitions of the word leisure, which include fun, enjoyment, or an activity away from and unrelated to work. The word leisure (*eukaria*) in Mark 6:31 is defined as an "opportunity" or "favorable occasion." The word also is used to denote one being in a position to "take advantage of the element of time as providing an opportunity; to have opportunity (Mk 6:31; 1 Cor 16:12); to have leisure for us to spend one's time in anything (Acts 17:21)."⁵

Regardless of how the term is defined, when we examine the socio-cultural backdrop of both testaments, we discover that the ancient Israelites and the first century Jewish people have a long history of engaging in celebrations, festivals, games and periods of retreat from work. They had fun! A closer look at the dynamics of worship, family, community, and society will reveal that activities such as dancing, games, use of wine, and hobbies were all important. *Let's work on understanding the importance of leisure in our lives with our families, church, and community.*

Biblical Example of the Need for Leisure

Mark 6:30-31 provides an excellent example of the need to find the balance between work and leisure. In this passage, Jesus **commands** his disciples to stop working and find a quiet place to rest, relax, and have some fun. Jesus spoke the following words to the twelve:

The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, Come with me by yourselves in a quiet place, and get

⁵ Zodhiates, 674.

some rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. (NIV)

Disciples often get overly busy with ministry and our daily living. The vital lesson learned from this teaching of Jesus is importance of balancing the work of building the Kingdom of God and the need for leisure. Mark labors to divert the reader to a more pressing issue, the problem of work versus leisure. The consecration of time, rest, and recreation are exclusive to Mark's version of the gospel. ***Let's work on avoiding being overworked in the name of Kingdom building or earning a living and work on making the time for leisure in our lives.***

Leisure as Self-care

Without leisure in our lives, we subject ourselves to unnecessary mental, physical, and even spiritual abuse. We all need a break to have fun. Notice the reaction of the disciples in Mark 6:35-36. The Twelve gently become irritated with Jesus because they were worn and tired and had no opportunity to restore their bodies and spirits. In order to continue to serve God we must restore our bodies and spirits. ***Let's work on taking the time for leisure as a part of self-care.***

Leisure and Church Tradition

All too often, the tradition of the church and unfounded beliefs about leisure are merged. As a result, incorrect beliefs are conveyed to congregants, which are internalized as gospel truths. Much of church tradition about leisure is grounded in a mistaken interpretation of the "Protestant Ethic." This line of thinking suggests that work is godly and having fun and enjoying life is sinful. Leland Ryken in *Work and Leisure in Christian Perspective* notes that: (1) religious tradition portrays leisure as sinful, slothful, self-indulgent, and idolatrous; (2) because of the lack of teaching on subjects related to work and leisure, our capacity to value leisure apart from work is diminished; and (3) congregants have not learned to enjoy "guilt free" leisure, or simply enjoying themselves without feeling hedonistic.

Unfortunately, the doctrine and dogma of the church are sometimes more damaging than helpful as related to leisure. As a result, a long list of prohibitions or "thou shall not do's" has manifested. This list of prohibitions for God's elect include, but is not limited to the consumption of alcohol, gambling, dancing, frequenting bars, attending "R" rated movies, and a host of others. What has evolved as a misinterpretation of doctrine and theology has resulted in "legalism" and enslavement. ***Let's work on renewing our thinking about Christian leisure and gaining an accurate understanding of scripture, doctrine, stewardship related to leisure.***

Conclusion

It is God's desire for humankind to have fun and engage in healthy Christian leisure as a part of our journey toward heaven. Too much work, in the church and in traditional employment, is unhealthy and can be damaging to mind, body, and spirit. Let's work on creating a healthy balance between worship, work, and leisure. God for Christian leisure. God has many blessings in store for those who obey him (Heb 11.6).

Questions for Reflection

Do you believe what the scriptures say about leisure?

Based on your understanding of scripture presented in the teaching notes, how important is Christian leisure to your faith journey?

Are you currently setting aside time for leisure during your week?

What appears to be your greatest hindrance to having adequate amounts of leisure time in your life?

Are there any conflicts between what you enjoy as leisure time activities and church teaching, church traditions, or scripture?

Action Toward Living the Abundant Life

Based on the content of the teaching notes, my study of scripture, reflection and prayer, I am committing to do the following three things to help me better manage work in my life:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Comments

Thank you for your assistance. Know that God will bless your faithfulness (Heb 11:6).

APPENDIX D
STATISTICAL TABLES

Table A1. Frequencies and Percentages- Protestant Work Ethic Scale (modified)

Fewer problems if less leisure time	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	12	13.50	13.50	13.50
2.00	10	11.20	11.20	24.70
3.00	16	18.00	18.00	42.70
4.00-Neutral	4	4.50	4.50	47.20
5.00	22	24.70	24.70	71.90
6.00	13	14.60	14.60	86.50
7.00-Strongly Agree	12	13.50	13.50	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
People who don't succeed are lazy	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	20	22.50	22.50	22.50
2.00	7	7.90	7.90	30.30
3.00	28	31.50	31.50	61.80
4.00-Neutral	2	2.20	2.20	64.00
5.00	12	13.50	13.50	77.50
6.00	12	13.50	13.50	91.00
7.00-Strongly Agree	8	9.00	9.00	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Successful if sacrifice certain pleasures	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	5	5.60	5.60	5.60
2.00	2	2.20	2.20	7.90
3.00	14	15.70	15.70	23.60
4.00-Neutral	31	34.80	34.80	58.40
5.00	14	15.70	15.70	74.20
6.00	14	15.70	15.70	89.90
7.00-Strongly Agree	9	10.10	10.10	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
More leisure time to relax	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	5	5.60	5.60	5.60
2.00	8	9.00	9.00	14.60
3.00	11	12.40	12.40	27.00
4.00-Neutral	36	40.40	40.40	67.40
5.00	4	4.50	4.50	71.90
6.00	15	16.90	16.90	88.80
7.00-Strongly Agree	10	11.20	11.20	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Table A1—*Continued*

People who work hard have a better chance of success	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	2	2.20	2.20	2.20
2.00	9	10.10	10.10	12.40
3.00	16	18.00	18.00	30.30
4.00-Neutral	5	5.60	5.60	36.00
5.00	42	47.20	47.20	83.10
6.00	15	16.90	16.90	100.00
7.00-Strongly Agree	89	100.00	100.00	
Fail at a job has not tried hard enough	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	3	3.40	3.40	3.40
2.00	26	29.20	29.20	32.60
3.00	3	3.40	3.40	36.00
4.00-Neutral	30	33.70	33.70	69.70
5.00	13	14.60	14.60	84.30
6.00	9	10.10	10.10	94.40
7.00-Strongly Agree	5	5.60	5.60	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Life would have little meaning without work	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	9	10.10	10.10	10.10
2.00	5	5.60	5.60	15.70
3.00	10	11.20	11.20	27.00
4.00-Neutral	30	33.70	33.70	60.70
5.00	14	15.70	15.70	76.40
6.00	14	15.70	15.70	92.10
7.00-Strongly Agree	7	7.90	7.90	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
Hard work offers little guarantee of success	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	8	9.00	9.00	9.00
2.00	10	11.20	11.20	20.20
3.00	17	19.10	19.10	39.30
4.00-Neutral	3	3.40	3.40	42.70
5.00	26	29.20	29.20	71.90
6.00	10	11.20	11.20	83.10
7.00-Strongly Agree	15	16.90	16.90	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

Table A1—*Continued*

Life would be more meaningful if we had more leisure time	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	6	6.70	6.70	6.70
2.00	12	13.50	13.50	20.20
3.00	10	11.20	11.20	31.50
4.00-Neutral	27	30.30	30.30	61.80
5.00	18	20.20	20.20	82.00
6.00	10	11.20	11.20	93.30
7.00-Strongly Agree	6	6.70	6.70	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	
If one works hard enough he/she will have a good life	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1.00-Strongly Disagree	12	13.50	13.50	13.50
2.00	6	6.70	6.70	20.20
3.00	21	23.60	23.60	43.80
4.00-Neutral	8	9.00	9.00	52.80
5.00	16	18.00	18.00	70.80
6.00	16	18.00	18.00	88.80
7.00-Strongly Agree	10	11.20	11.20	100.00
Total	89	100.00	100.00	

**United Theological Seminary
Dayton, Ohio**

**Faculty Approval Page
Doctor of Ministry Final Project Dissertation**

**RECAPTURING THE ABUNDANT LIFE: LEISURE COUNSELING
AS PASTORAL CARE**

by

Steven N. Waller, Sr.

United Theological Seminary

Mentor

Anne McWilliams, Ph.D.

Date: _____

Approved:

Mentor:

Dean, Doctoral Studies

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